

# PEACE OFFERING

*by*

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## PREFACE

*THINK not to explore, estimate and accumulate those infinite dark happenings into a single view . . .*

I believe such a principle is the First Commandment for all who try to tackle the problem of peace in our time. It applies to slim volumes and arguments as much as to Bridges' mighty context, which is the epic of all warfare, 'the obliterated aeons of man's ordeal'.

This short peace offering is in fourteen semi-detached essays built out of informal interviews and a special article, extensive notes and selected quotations, and put together during the eight critical months between October 1935 and May 1936.

Readers who hunger for close sequence and interlocking arguments are not fed. It is peace offering by impression, by variations upon a vast theme.

My purpose has been to emphasize diverse and distinguished opinions upon peace and war and to fill them in with comments of my own. Settlement is the recurring theme; first in the language of politics, and second in terms of individual conscience and behaviour.

I am privileged to begin the political part of the book with a vigorous retrospect in the form of an interview with Mr. Lloyd George, who stoutly defends the Versailles settlement of 1919. Here is shown perhaps most clearly the impress of Personality upon Peace, though all through the book this essential but elusive factor is implied.

'The Trials of Democracy' is an attempt to analyse the dilemma of our present Parliamentary system and to extract peace from civil service and party programme. The interview with Lord Allen of Hurtwood leads out

of this and links up the name of action within the mere domestic circle to the real thing—positive short-term foreign policy.

The facets of international relations are legion, and I have picked upon security as raising the most comprehensive and urgent problems, and upon the Far Eastern crisis as involving the gravest danger. Here I am further privileged to include the Earl of Lytton's personal selection and estimate of the significant facts underlying the Sino-Japanese dispute.

The meaning of security as defined in the political language of the New Germany is set out in a separate chapter by Major-General Haushofer, who, as President of the Deutsche Akademie (a cultural institution founded in 1933), and as a personal friend of Herr Hess (Hitler's Vice-Chancellor), occupies a privileged position in the Third Reich.

I include this powerful and provocative article just as it was sent to me, without abridgment or commentary, for I believe that it conveys German policy to-day and the theory behind it far more decisively than many volumes of tiresome explanation by Press-fed critics, literary visitors or well-informed refugees. The brief talk with Sir Edward Grigg, which follows, breathes the sense of crisis among our own majority in Parliament.

'Sidelights on Security' is designed to relate American 'evasion', Russian and French 'fulfilment' with the demands of an effective League system.

'Pacifism in Embryo' is concerned with conscientious objections modified, developed or sustained by yet another Young England. I have tried to catch the quality of an incoherent creed and to emphasize a persistent contrast with the political search for settlement.

There follow five chapters based upon conversations

with men who, directly or indirectly, are having a challenging influence upon the individualist conception of peace. •

For Mr. Beverley Nichols, pacifism means the claims of Christ New Risen—a journey from scepticism to faith; for Dr. Sheppard it is Conscience and the Claims of My Master. Mr. Aldous Huxley stresses the psychological validity of non-resistance; the Dean of St. Paul's puts Peace on the scales of logic and moral comparison; for Mr. Noel Coward—who draws an enormous Peace and War public—it is, roughly, the sin of enthusiasm.

In 'The Myth of Public Opinion' my purpose has been to point the moral of a limiting factor all too often ignored.

I wish to make it clear at the outset that neither the interviews, nor the German article, are meant to conform to a central theme. In purpose and scope they are separate from each other, from the comments I have attached to them, and from the four chapters of my own.

There are extensive quotations, but they have been chosen with some care and may help to show that very little is new in Peace and War controversy.

It will not, I hope, be too strongly pressed against me that the signs are abundant of my faith in many masters. This book has not been written in the fullness of experience and knowledge; it is the account of an anxious journey to find them. If ego is obtrusive, perhaps those who are having the same personal struggle will abide the fault. We are aware that the subject is too great for us; we are aware also that we may at any moment be asked by authorities to decide as if it were all easy and straightforward; hence much that is tentative and much that is merely presumptuous.

To return to our Laureate and his 'loose alexandrines', Peace Offering is many fragments, but out of the apparent

confusion may be one advantage. Some Peace and War essays are so concise and well arranged and generally so unanswerable that the reader is borne along a tide of facile agreement with the author only to be borne back again even further by the daily and continuous ebb of opposing influences. If Peace Offering reflects hurry, my limited time, skill and opportunity, I still feel that the effort involved has not been wholly unavailing, for I have been allowed to bear witness to opinions of weight and eminence in public life, of charity, fervour, and instinctive penetration, of youthful vigour and mature wisdom, opinions, in short, that are strong enough to strike at War and give substance to Peace.

Peace Offering has meant considerable correspondence and other detailed work peculiar to a book of this kind. It follows that I have incurred a debt of gratitude I cannot fully repay here. It is impossible for me to express satisfactorily my thanks to General Haushofer for his impressive article. All those whom I have interviewed have approved their respective manuscripts and have made kind and helpful comments. I can only trust that the finished product will go some small way to meet all the trouble they have taken individually.

I want especially to thank Mrs. C. F. G. Masterman, her son, Mr. Neville Masterman, Mr. Adolf Schlegel, the Misses Barbara and Lucy Young, and Mr. Young for letters of introduction; members of the German Embassy for their courtesy in dealing with my many requests; Dr. Erich Hetzler for his invaluable assistance in Berlin; and to his friends for their translation of the German MS.; to Mr. Herbert Hoover for his letter and the copy of *The Challenge to Liberty* with permission to quote from

his writings and speeches, and to his publishers, Messrs. Charles Scribner's Sons, Ltd., for their confirmatory sanction. Last but not least, I am indebted to the untiring patience of Miss Cicily Broadhurst with my illegible manuscripts, and to the judgment of Mr. Howard Cox, who has been all through my guide, philosopher and friend.

A. C. J.

WESTMINSTER

*September 1936*



PART I  
THE LANGUAGE OF POLITICS

IN their political arrangements, men have no right to put the wellbeing of the present generation wholly out of the question. Perhaps the only moral trust with any certainty in our hands is the care of our own time. With regard to futurity, we are to treat it like a ward. We are not so to attempt an improvement of his fortune as to put the capital of his estate to any hazard.

EDMUND BURKE:

*An Appeal from the New to the Old Whigs*

IN Great Britain the public mind was passing through one of the most regrettable phases in its history. It must be admitted that after the War, in which 70 million young men had been mobilized, in which 10 million had been killed, in which 30 million had been wounded, it would be unreasonable to suppose that any Democracy could regard with unclouded nerves the spectacle of four gentlemen sitting in a guarded room together discussing the result.

HAROLD NICOLSON: *Peacemaking*, 1919



## CHAPTER I

### PEACE AND PERSONALITY

#### MR. LLOYD GEORGE ON VERSAILLES

*I. The first question—Imposed Treaty—Wilson, Paris, and the French—The League—I.L.O.—Minorities—Polish Corridor—Reparations—The question of delay—Versailles and Vienna—The Foreign Office and Peace Making—American Republicans—Wilson and Clemenceau—The XIV Points—‘War is cruel!’—The Italians—Afterthoughts.*

*II. Criticism of Versailles—Reductio ad absurdum—Future Reckoning—Analogy in Mimature.*

*III. Peace and Personality.*

#### I

‘THE first question I would ask such gentlemen who criticize the Treaty of Versailles is whether they have read it. The only criticism I had to face when I got back was that I didn’t go far enough. It was accepted by the Liberals, and Masterman accepted it’—Mr. Lloyd George looked at me significantly; it was Mrs. Masterman who had introduced me to him. ‘Donald Maclean accepted it, the Labour Party—Clynes—accepted it. You must remember that the opposition had suddenly crumpled up and that it was an imposed Treaty, but we began negotiating while the enemy was still on French territory and France was bleeding.’

He agreed that it was a great mistake to have met in Paris at all. ‘I had been in communication with Wilson to have it either at Geneva or on some other neutral territory. Wilson first of all agreed to this but then promised the French that he would support their claim for it to be at Paris. Yes, this was a serious mistake.’

He asked me to ‘remember that the *first* part of the Treaty set up the League of Nations—do they criticize

that? Then, in the second place, it brought into existence the International Labour Organization to improve and regulate wages and the workmen's standard of living throughout the world. Do they criticize that? Then, thirdly, it released oppressed races and minorities. He referred in particular to the provisions made for the Southern Slavs.

'There are those who say "What about the Polish Corridor cutting Germany in half?"', but the proportion of Poles to Germans in the Corridor works out at about four to one, so I cannot see that the Germans had any very good claim.'

Mr. Lloyd George had been ticking off on his fingers the various points he made. He looked most of the time straight ahead of him and spoke with great energy. Though his is no longer a young man's voice, he has the elemental quality of youthful self-confidence. The unapproachable grandeur associated with elder statesmanship is simply not part of his temperament. What is most immediately attractive about him is the complete absence of any condescension. He has a buoyancy and a directness which seem to put all criticism on the defensive.

'Is there anything then,' I said, 'that, on looking back at the Treaty, you now think you would have done differently?'

We were in a typical ante-room where the ceiling is considerably farther from the floor than the walls from each other, but the chairs were very comfortable and the fire blazing—unusual concessions.

'No, I cannot see what else we could have done. Take, for instance, Reparations. We based our policy on the supposition that America would continue to be represented; but America went out, and when she went

out there was no impartial Power left to adjudicate the sum. In the meanwhile Poincaré had taken over in France, and he stuck out for the maximum. First of all we estimated that Reparations would come in by 1921.'

'So it was not generally realized that Wilson was likely to be let down at home?'

'We had not estimated that Wilson would not carry the Senate with him or that he would be so obstinate. I sent Grey over to America in August 1919, but Wilson would not see him. No, I don't see now what it is we could have done, having regard to the fact that America refused to enter the League.'

I mentioned some of Harold Nicolson's criticisms put forward in his brilliant *Peacemaking 1919*, and said he made much of the unfortunate factor of delay. 'This delay of more than nine weeks', he writes, 'between the signing of the Armistice and the first serious attempt to get down to business will certainly remain as one of the most unanswerable criticisms of the Paris Conference.'

Mr. Lloyd George emphasized the complexity and universal scope of the problems they had to face. 'When exactly was the Treaty signed?' he asked—'Oh, yes, by about the end of June. Between January and June we got through an enormous amount of work. We had first of all to organize the waterways of Europe. This is often ignored. The Rhine runs through two or three countries; the Danube through five or six. We had to consider Boundaries, Armaments, Reparations. I think it is worth while comparing Versailles with Vienna. If Napoleon had not escaped from Elba, the Congress of Vienna would have broken up and there would have been no Treaty at all.'

I remarked that Nicolson's criticisms, although, of course, the second part of the book was his diary of the

time, might perhaps be said to represent too much a Foreign Office point of view.

\* *Mr. Lloyd George* (vigorously): 'If we had left it to the Foreign Office we could not have done it. The main burden fell on Sir Maurice Hankey', who was, he said, 'a brilliant organizer.' 'It was Hankey who became the real Secretary of the Council of Four. Clemenceau soon realized how valuable he was and Dutasta, the official Secretary, was allowed to sink into the background. The Foreign Office knew nothing of Armaments. Hankey handled the whole of that problem. Clemenceau took much the same view and did not leave things to his Foreign Office; he entrusted the more important work to men like Klotz. Waterways were done by us—Llewellyn Smith did them, and George Barnes did the I.L.O. With Labour and Transport problems the Foreign Office had nothing to do. Boundaries was their business, and Balfour was put in charge of this section of the work.'

He emphasized again how they had no idea that Wilson would be beaten at home. But, I asked, would the negotiations have been made easier if a Republican like Hoover had then been President? He did not think so, but he felt it would have made all the difference if Wilson had brought over Taft or Root. The Republicans should have been placated in this way: further, Taft was very pro-League, as was Root. He ought to have asked Hughes, who was also a League man. He did not think it would have been possible at that time for Lodge to have been invited.

As for Wilson's personal attendance, Mr. Lloyd George linked that with the choice of Paris for the Conference as 'a great mistake'.

He said that he himself 'got on very well with Wilson'. I asked whether there was any deep antipathy between

Wilson and Clemenceau. He replied that they were quite friendly.

*A. C. J.*: 'Were Wilson's Fourteen Points a dominating or distracting influence in the negotiations? Mr. Nicholson emphasizes the breakdown of an initial idealism.'

*Mr. Lloyd George*: 'They didn't come in much. If there had been Freedom of the Seas we couldn't have beaten Germany. Public opinion had been behind the arms of the Central Powers. Blockade beat them. It meant the starvation of the men, women and children,'—he was walking about the room; he suddenly stopped, turned round and, staring at me with an intensity as much as to say, "let the whole world bear witness of me in this",—"but that is what war means! All war is cruel! On March 21st 1918 the German armies came upon two or three Allied food-supplies. The poor devils hadn't seen such food for years.'

I asked him whether he thought Clemenceau was a destructive influence as far as a healing peace was concerned.

'Personally, I liked Clemenceau. Oh, yes, he was terribly rude to representatives of the smaller Powers and indeed to every one, but I stood up to him.'

I said, 'I understand you always succeeded in forestalling his anger.'

*Mr. Lloyd George*: 'Oh, yes, I wasn't afraid of him'—then, with an inimitable wag of the head and glint in the eye—'and he knew it—and I think he liked me for it. Humanity meant nothing to him. That was the language of Pacifists. He was first and foremost a Patriot. His only thought was France. I liked him.'

I asked whether the Italian delegation might with justice be regarded the villains of the piece.

'I am sorry to have to say it really, but the Italians carried little weight.'

Mr. Lloyd George's contention was that Orlando and Sonnino tended to work against each other—this cancelled out their influence. They never succeeded in presenting their case. Orlando was 'astute, kind and pliable'. Sonnino was 'harsh, unbending and obstinate'. 'Wilson was really at fault with the Italians. He made a great fuss about Fiume, which did not count, and none at all about the annexation of the Tyrol, which was a far greater concession.'

I had time only to ask what he thought of the part played by the delegates of some of the smaller Powers. I mentioned Venizelos. 'He was a man of remarkable ability and charm. His personal prestige was enormous. Venizelos and Benes were probably the outstanding personalities of the Conference.'

The talk ended by Mr. Lloyd George explaining what had been the immediate difficulties, how to meet and temper the overwhelming mass of excessive demands. My last note is 'Left Bank of Rhine'.

It was a quarter to three and he was due to take before the Speaker of the House of Commons the Oath of Allegiance to His Majesty King Edward VIII. A moment, perhaps, of pause—death of kings and the passing of great struggles; but as I left and walked through a wintry sunlit St. James's Park the feeling that overwhelmed me was not of regret, or even of reminiscence, but of a very rare and excellent light-heartedness. The foundation of peace, I felt, is not so much a formula as an infectious smile—a *joie de vivre*.

Some men live on to-day reflecting only the inspiration of a glorious hour that is gone. Others, like T. E. Lawrence, are sustained by an inner fire. Theirs is the fascination of the enigma. They can command a complete yet a fundamentally cold devotion. Now, Mr.

Lloyd George is not of these. For his exuberance is constant and the flame of his personality gives out warmth. He seems to have the quality ideal for the peacemaker, which is the artist's, the creator's love of life translated into terms of political action. The historian-critic will always tend to point to the dangers of virtuosity or to the breakdown of standards from a too ready deference to what in psychology's beautiful language is called 'compulsion of instinct'; but it is the historian-critic's danger that his very method of approach to personality under-estimates the virtue of the great man who lives persistently and fully in the present.

## II

For those who are content to barter a negative criticism it is enough to lie back in an arm-chair and deplore the Treaty of Versailles. It is extremely satisfactory when arguing politics to be able to attribute all our miseries and shortcomings to one original abuse, but there are difficulties, and certain conditions must be fulfilled. The abuse must have borne decisively on world history and have been sufficiently technical to avoid the well-informed verdict. It must be universally known, but never universally understood.

Nearly all Peace Treaties have qualified for this rôle of scapegoat, and even the well informed and cultured Lady Wortley-Montagu could not see more to Utrecht than that it was like God's Peace, both long in coming and when it came passed all understanding. Treaties coincide with popular war weariness, but the temper that made and sustained a war usually runs on into the period of negotiation. The demand is that the peace will simply give final effect to the exaggerated and incompatible

claims that caused the war and its suffering. But war is waged because negotiation has broken down after trial, or been rejected without it. The Treaty is the *reductio ad absurdum* which the people, remembering only their own sacrifices and the promises made to them, cannot accept. Their exhaustion is equalled only by their impatience.

All this is sufficiently self-evident to be trite and to be ignored. Transfer an epithet: you cannot take out of a world war as much as you put into it; but do not expect to have a following when once more the battle-cry has been raised and the delegates are sent to collect the spoils in 1945.

What then of Versailles—the account rendered of the warfare of twenty-eight nations? It attracted to itself an unprecedented onslaught of irresponsible damnation. The atmosphere of war frenzy was exploited by some of the most savage and unscrupulous journalism known to history.

There is the testimony of Professor Gilbert Murray: 'Behind the statesmen who had pledged their words, however unwillingly, remained masses of ignorant, violent and war-maddened people, many of them with terrible wrongs to avenge and no guide or leader to help them against themselves. We need not recall, though few sensitive people will ever forget, the horrors of the propaganda of hate.'<sup>1</sup>

This terrible wound has healed, but another generation, unaware of the Armistice fever, is now confusing the Treaty with all the murderous intentions that surrounded it. Versailles is now attacked by a new intolerance in the form of strange and bitter political dogmas. It is pilloried as the crowning act of capitalist hypocrisy or as the perpetuation of military bondage; it is denounced as the

<sup>1</sup> *Intelligent Man's Way to Prevent War*, p. 75. 'Revision of the Peace Treaties.'



symbol of political decadence in the West. Keynes laid bare economic fallacies apparently ignored at Versailles and helped to supply various party and non-party groups with their revisionist slogans. Even the respectable Peace Society called the Treaty 'a betrayal of the ideals in the spirit of which the war was presumably fought'.

It was Lord Acton's opinion in 1895 that it had only just become possible to view Napoleon's career in correct historical perspective. It will probably take longer than that before Versailles and its personalities will be ripe for similar estimate; but it is essential for all who are anxious to design their own small peace offerings to have reached some broad conclusions, however partial, on this, the most comprehensive peace offering of all.

Time may well confirm three impressions. First, that the production of a document of European settlement agreeable to all the Allied Powers within eight months of Armistice was an achievement outweighing all other defects. Secondly, that although we to-day are more aware of such symptoms as Clause 231, our grandchildren will be recalling other clauses which emphasize Revision and Peaceful Change. Thirdly, that the British delegation has the chief credit for sowing the seeds of tolerance in the Treaty. Versailles was not the declaration of new wars, the excuse for to-day's boom in armament shares, but rather the means to settlement on a scale hitherto unknown. Accordingly, in addition to, and even in spite of, his world reputation as a war organizer, Mr. Lloyd George will stand pre-eminent in the high but misunderstood order of Peace Prime Ministers.

An analogy in miniature, perhaps, is Shelburne. Both were shipwrecked by a Peace of Paris designed to bring about a general settlement, both negotiated along opportunist lines, both were temperamentally suited for this

method and, it would seem, realized that tactics during discussions are more likely to achieve enduring results than stubborn moral purpose or rigid strategy. Both incurred deep and damaging distrust for their pains, though Mr. Lloyd George has inspired widespread personal affection, which Shelburne never did. They share the same reputation of mystery, but with this significant difference, that whereas Shelburne did nothing to popularize his, and became the 'Jesuit of Berkeley Square', the jovial daemon in Mr. Lloyd George has won our hearts as the 'Wizard from Wales'. Both were unwilling to submit to the dictates of the party game.

Mr. Lloyd George, then, is in the direct tradition of the Minister 'reared in the wilds of southern Ireland' who, according to Bentham, was 'the only statesman who never feared the people' and, according to Disraeli, was 'the first great Minister who saw the importance of the middle-class'.

Shelburne has been called one of the great suppressed characters of history; but if Mr. Lloyd George is stifled it will be by the sheer weight of words.

### III

Power, as Mr. Aldous Huxley pointed out to me, is degradation, but that is not the last word; it can be the reward of a unique vitality, a prophetic gleam which lights the darkness of other men's lives.

We cannot extract peace from political power; we must identify our hopes with a belief in leadership, and, unless we want to sink into bureaucratic slumbers, that leadership must mean personality.

Let us take our choice: admire the sombre precocity of a Pitt, who at the age of fourteen could snub Gibbon

and at twenty-three refuse the Premiership; the theatrical imperialism of a Chatham; the constitutional sensibilities of a 'Trimmer'; the downright vigour of a Palmerston; the quietist ambitions of a Walpole; the moral grandeur of a Gladstone; the intricate orientalism of a Disraeli. Let us try and derive satisfaction from this country having muddled through with the assistance of all types, from the intellectual and oratorical eminence of a Burke and an Asquith, to a Rockingham who did not know how to make a speech and a Bedford who was—it is reported—only rarely acquainted by his wife of what opinions he held. But we would do well to remember always that the greatest responsibility for peace fell to a man who combined vision with adaptability, an autocratic will with the democratic faith.

For authority, after all, must depend upon internal roots if it is to be of any avail. We too rarely consider how difficult is the decision to combat the state. The presumption in general opinion is, for the most part, on its side. Order is the accustomed mode of life, and to betray it seems like enough to social treason. There is probably no epoch in social history where organized resistance to state-decision has not its root in some deep grievance honestly conceived. It was so in 1381; it was so in 1642, in 1688 and in 1789. 'Reform that you may preserve' is, as Macaulay said, 'the voice of great events.' The state has barely needed that constant warning; and the beatification of the *status quo* is ever its main source of danger. . . .

The real danger in any society is lest decision on great events secure only the passive concurrence of the mass of men. It is only by intensifying the active participation of men in the business of government that liberty can be made secure. For there is a poison in power against which even the greatest of nations must be on its guard. The temptation demands resistances; and the solution is to deprive the state of any priority not fully won by performance.

H. J. LASKI: *Authority in the Modern State*

## CHAPTER II

### THE TRIALS OF DEMOCRACY

I. *British Foreign Policy defined—Rule of the Subordinates—The Diplomatic Code—Two examples—The need for reform—Permanent Officials—Credits and Tyranny.*

II. *The Moral pre-eminence of England—Recent Foreign Secretaries—Mr. Henderson—Sir Austen Chamberlain—Sir John Simon—Sir Samuel Hoare—The Prime Ministers—Secret Service.*

III. *Political Remedies—The position of Liberalism—Dean Inge's criticism considered—The bases of Liberal action—The Conservative Renaissance—Idealism and Complacency.*

IV. *Labour's analysis—Mr. Attlee on capitalism—Short Cuts—'The Passing of Politics'—Pacifism and Sanctions—The status of Mr. Lansbury—Labour's House of Lords*

V. *Communists and Moscow—Fascists and Humour—'Social Arrangement'—The real challenge to Parliament.*

#### I

BRITISH policy towards the new-born League of Nations has been defined as 'an attempt to co-ordinate the elements of pre-war international politics through the establishment of *an improved consultative system*'.<sup>1</sup>

Such a compromise, if it had been honestly attempted, might or might not have proved impracticable, but it has not been honestly attempted. The authors of the Covenant are not to blame; they could not foresee a series of administrations in England—Conservative and Labour—that would have neither sufficient conviction nor ability to overrule the technical domination of the Foreign Office.

The Covenant was devised in the belief that it would

<sup>1</sup> By Sir Alfred Zimmern in lecture, 'The Great Powers in the League of Nations,' delivered at Geneva in August, 1934. (See *Problems of Peace*, Ninth Series. Allen & Unwin.)

attract to itself an expert secretariat ultimately absorbing the Chancery, Whitehall, confidential envoys and secret dispatches. But the belief has proved even more unfounded than that which expected governments—the supreme symbols of National self-determination—to merge their pretensions in some higher world sovereignty.

The traditions of a diplomatic system, the underlying obstinacy of officials, indeed, the fascination of technical and mysterious routine has so far to all appearances triumphed over any latent internationalism there may have been in post-War politics. Dictatorships in Europe, National Governments in England, have only meant that the relentless grip of the subordinates over national policies has been tightened. Now it is certain, however much you may distrust a National Government and deplore a Mussolini, your subordinate, by undermining their initiative, will not at the same time be creating a new initiative for himself. He will always be circumscribed by his original terms of reference. The tragedy of our present position is that we are ruled by experts who are themselves ruled by a diplomatic code that has no necessary relation to general welfare.

Admittedly, the Civil Service in England is attracting to itself—as the rigour of its examinations would suggest—only the highest intellectual talent. Of all aristocracies they have most reason to be contemptuous of every political gesture that seeks guidance from Demos. There is nothing in their training and work to encourage an estimate of the public much above that of manipulated statistics. Their language is in government department jargon; like the income-tax forms—sense without meaning, words without life. Even in terms of diplomatic intrigue, almost too involved to be defined accurately as reflecting balance of power.

We may see it perhaps in two quotations taken at random from *Time and Tide* leaders last year. First: 'As a guarantor of Locarno, Britain is supposed to be an intermediary, not an ally. This is a line of argument which even so adroit a lawyer as Sir John Simon would find it difficult to combat, even if he wanted to combat it; and the possibilities are that the Cabinet, and the accommodating MM. Flandin and Laval, will relieve him of that necessity. Meantime, the Little Entente, the Balkan group and Russia are all voicing a profound uneasiness at the turn of events, and M. Laval is having a hard time to explain that the guarantees of security he has wrenched at last from a reluctant Britain do not mean that France is less interested in Russia, or will now weaken on the proposed Eastern Locarno, abandoning the basis of military guarantee of frontiers',<sup>1</sup> etc.

Second: 'When France and her allies failed to stop German rearmament, and Hitler grew strong and menacing, Poland trimmed sail again, and a Polish-German agreement was achieved which the chancellories believe is based on a secret bargain to exchange "the Corridor" for Ukraine acquisitions and a partition of Czechoslovakia, loot of the war-to-come',<sup>2</sup> etc.

These accounts, no doubt, were a well-informed analysis of the political situation as it appeared in the spring of 1935, but if we analyse the analysis we will see that it was then and is now an idiom that bears but little relation to any appreciable need among civilized communities.

The danger does not appear until we get to Clausewitz's definition of war as 'policy carried on by other means'. That the peoples of the world are at the disposal of Governments to supply the military sanction when the

<sup>1</sup> From *Time and Tide*, February 23rd, 1935, pp. 260-1.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, May 18th, 1935, p. 729.

routine deceptions of diplomacy during peace time have failed, but that the public interest demands secrecy beforehand are by now assumptions at once casual, depraved and barbarian. If diplomatic activity is removed from our lives in time of peace there is no particularly satisfying case for it to be linked up to us when it means war.

There is evidence that Whitehall has been exerting too strong an influence on recent British administrations and that it is altogether too firmly protected from popular control. The Government may have found the resignation of Sir Samuel Hoare necessary in response to a great uprising of public opinion, but on what democratic principle is his solitary removal a sufficient remedy?

The world may have been startled by the portent of an independent and popular democratic emotion, but the fact we have to face is that the men who took the chief part in framing a policy that had to be officially rescinded in Parliament remain untouched. The Under-Secretaryship at the Foreign Office should be tenable for two years without reappointment; the advantages of fresh ideas override those of continuity. Thus, there comes a time in the careers of important Civil Servants when there should be promotion to spheres of influence where a love of French culture no longer means surreptitious ententes and persistent policy outside the League though within its 'framework'. The sheltered permanency of their power is an autocratic tradition. Diplomacy must be reduced to its proper status. It must become a convention of the constitution, that its every plan be given widespread publicity and subjected to the most general criticism. But that will never be acceptable. The basis of all successful parleys—it will be protested—is the privilege of informality and of secrecy. You can never go back on the written public statement. It is final, irremediable. Why?



Let us reform it altogether, remembering it has already spilt more blood than it can answer for.

One particular fatuity of our Foreign Office method is to be seen in the apparently self-imposed limitations of its range of influence. No diplomatic policy, for instance, based with sincere resolve either on the maintenance of the *status quo* or on disarmament could have allowed the credit arrangements of the Bank of England to be carried on without any effective interference over so many years.

Whether or no the unbridled rule of the lawyers within the Commons has been standing in the way of a Rule of Law between nations, posterity, it seems, alone can decide. Certainly theirs has proved the most persistent and obstinate of all parliamentary vested interests.

What is more susceptible to opinion here and now is the warning of so eminent a constitutional authority as Professor W. S. Holdsworth. 'The bureaucrats of Whitehall,' he said recently, 'who dominate the Cabinet, which in its turn dominates the House of Commons, have established a more effectual and a more oppressive tyranny than the Stuarts ever succeeded in establishing.'

## II

The moral pre-eminence of England in the open councils of nations is a fact that can be denied but not avoided. We have a responsibility that will not be dissipated by the policy of the ostrich, the policy of wait and not see, of hide and not seek. Yet the history of our foreign policy since the War is of commitments *ex post facto* and of concessions that have been cat's meat to the hungry lion. How far is this to be attributed to personnel?

Of our Foreign Secretaries Mr. Henderson proved the most successful. He did not believe that peace could be

resolved into a formula, but even of him it is said that he proved a match for Mussolini merely because the combination of interpreters and his own mental processes made it impossible for the Duce to score points by hustle. Further, Mr. Henderson was, as Mr. Nichols has shown, a man prematurely tired out by the wearying round of public duties, the failure of Disarmament.

Few can challenge the integrity of Sir Austen Chamberlain, but when, or if ever, the full price of Locarno is paid some may wonder whether integrity is quite enough.

Mr. Arnold-Forster, pointing to a fundamental weakness in the Treaty, says 'above all it omits any provision, beyond a general declaration of intention, in regard to disarmament. In effect, therefore, Great Britain played the greatest stake at her command—her pledge of military aid to France against Germany or vice versa—without buying any disarmament in return.'<sup>1</sup> From this failure he draws the quite sound conclusion that 'Great Britain was in some respects in a much weaker position thereafter for pressing France to disarm'.<sup>2</sup>

Sir Austen has now an enormous parliamentary prestige. He can rebuke the Prime Minister with impunity, and he can apparently dispense with the mere limitations of logic, for in one of his recent speeches, after pointing out 'if the War broke out anywhere there was no power on earth that could set a limit to its devastation or to the area which it would affect'. He concluded, '*If that is so,*'<sup>3</sup> we must look to our defences.'

Nevertheless, the signing of Locarno put the seal to a new spirit in international negotiation, and the passing

<sup>1</sup> *Intelligent Man's Way to Prevent War*, p. 334. 'Arbitration, Security, Disarmament.'

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> The italics are mine.

of Briand and Stresemann symbolized the end of a great hope in the West.<sup>1</sup>

It is not enough to mark down the tragedy of Sir John Simon's tenure as due simply to legal caution. As Foreign Secretary he showed but little of that stability which comes from firm political principles. He was resourceful in negation; he had technique without faith. He wanted popularity without the price that has to be paid for it. He rejected the Hoover proposals, not because they went too far, but because they did not go far enough. The Americans would have accepted, with polite resignation, any other excuse.

From one point of view Sir John Simon seemed to misunderstand Continental temperament. He would tend to begin by working out the points of disagreement and then hope for a residue of peace, whereas the European statesmen tend to kiss, sketch out the general terms of universal harmony, and leave the experts to square the vicious circle. If the extravagant technique fails, hatred follows infatuation; but the logical approach virtually rules out success.

Sir Samuel Hoare's term was too short for more than gesture. His defence of the Abyssinian scheme of settlement was a great and dignified argument, and in terms of national polity quite as worthy of respect as its Geneva

<sup>1</sup> In March 1931, Sir Austen Chamberlain addressed the boys of Westminster School on Locarno. Afterwards, during tea, he said of Stresemann, 'I at first admired Stresemann, but my admiration grew into liking'; of Briand, 'A bulwark at League of Nations meetings, he gave every one a feeling of security'. He praised the personal contacts Geneva afforded, and told a story of Pilsudski, Stresemann, and the Lithuanian delegate, how a very good lunch stopped an otherwise certain war, he also suggested one possible disadvantage—frayed tempers from personal idiosyncrasies—and mentioned Titulescu, who always shivered when a window was open, however warm the weather was, and whose wife did a great service to the cause of International Peace by making him a present of a little hot-water bottle he could always keep with him.

prologue. Nothing became his responsibilities like the leaving them. Nevertheless, Geneva meant independence of the Whitehall system and the Commons. speech acquiescence in it.

In spite of recent hoardings which have confused Mr. Baldwin with photographs of men advertising quack medicines, there has, admittedly, been a succession of Prime Ministers that has hardly helped to vindicate the claims of democratic leadership. Mr. Bonar Law, obsequious and overwhelmed by office; Mr. MacDonald, a prophet who has forgotten his message; and Mr. Baldwin himself, an exponent of *Forty Years On*, 'reared in a litter of directorships', and emerging from prolonged parliamentary obscurity only when the arteries had hardened and steady apology become a habit—a man who, both from his experience and inclination, has come to rely more and more on tactics and less and less on strategy.

No policy has emerged from No. 10 Downing Street to appease, even in some small degree, the latent yearnings of the people for international settlement as against platitude. No longer does it house the highest expression of the national will; the control has passed to officials whose rule is the rule of thumb. The struggle for peace is becoming more and more bound up with the growth of bureaucratic influence in our Government. However much we may admire the monumental talents of Sir Maurice Hankey, as good democrats we must always be suspicious of our experts. We must be vigilant against the very limitations of their method. It is in the public interest to know a little more of what it is not in the public interest to know.

The time has now come for an inquiry into the working of the Official Secrets Act. Of course there are documents which might well be of the most sinister use to an enemy

Power—the more reason for exposing them, so that all may read them. There will then be no need for the potential enemy to sink to that particularly beastly form of political prostitution we grace with the name of Secret Service. What's in a name? Just this, that it can give crime its wrong epithet. Films that dote on the heroic qualities inspired by spying, falsify our moral perspective. If we want to get a thrill out of surreptitious bravery we might as well substitute them with equivalent epics glorifying the mysterious masters of the White Slave Traffic. The test is that when the system is reformed the spy has no potentially higher function; his is the most degraded of all national duties.

It is a matter for grave disquiet that British Secret Service estimates are up by £70,000, which is a whole third part of the previous total. Every pound added to espionage swells the overdraft of national integrity. Secret service does not become a virtue because of its necessity, nor because it is practised by every one else, nor even because nations share their spies. It is a sufficient abuse to render the whole cause of national self-defence suspect.

### III

The political remedy has to be found if the individual is to take action, without making pacifism an absolute principle or objections solely a matter of conscience. He has to translate into political terms his resistance to national pretensions which, in his judgment, foster war by trading in lies or by setting a premium on all that we associate with shame. This will keep him busy, for it means daily self-discipline, check on apparently trivial habits of thought and expression. Further, it means some general assessment of a host of political claims

diverse and often wholly incompatible. A General Election is no occasion to begin the process of sifting the various conceptions of peace, whether as political means or moral end or economic by-product.

What underlies the party slogan, the movement in embryo, the government in power? For the most part it seems that the traditional tendencies survive, even if disguised in modern trappings.

In his essay, *Our Present Discontents*, written immediately after the War, Dean Inge dismissed Liberalism in a paragraph, and in doing so raised those objections which have helped, perhaps more than any dissensions between leaders, to keep the Liberal Party an ineffective minority. Of course, those personal quarrels at the top were and probably are still disastrous; but Dr. Inge found Liberalism invalid because its estimate of human nature was too favourable and because it believed in the law of progress. On the whole, progress was a myth and men were wicked. Further, there was a fundamental contradiction between the two main dogmas of Liberalism—of unlimited competition and of individualism as an end. The logical conclusions were individualist and communist anarchy. The economic and ethical theories of Liberalism were irreconcilable.<sup>1</sup>

But even if his claims are justified, a party that has fallen from having as part of its creed too great a trust in human nature will probably release the seed of future power; and to identify the slump of Liberalism with that in Victorian Progress Unlimited is to misread the list of shareholders. The social legislation of 1906-1913 was certainly not actuated by a belief that all was for the best in the best of all possible worlds. Lastly, the Dean over-emphasizes the logical difficulty both in economy and

<sup>1</sup> See *Outspoken Essays*, First Series, p. 14.

ethic. The Liberal does not ask more than that the State should serve individual initiative. It is a matter of framing a policy on the belief that the State exists for the benefit of the individual and not the individual for that of the State. This emphasis may be a commonplace, but in the last resort both Labour and Conservatism tend to shrink from it; and at the same time it gives Liberalism its strong international flavour. For Free Trade is reciprocity and persistent research to enhance economic goodwill. Modern warfare is regarded as the fallacy of rival national groups striving to be more powerful than each other. There is one economic process with three distinct stages of action. First, a barrier of tariffs intensifying the original economic injustice and creating social unrest through widespread under-consumption. Second, a barrier of armament production to stimulate the tariffs. Third, a barrier of armaments in use.

Accordingly, Liberalism admits material assistance in the removal of the first and second stages through the appointment of a permanent armament council and trade commission. Both bodies for the present would be centred at Geneva, being affiliated to the information departments of the League Secretariat. Their purpose would be to report to the parties in the various states that have taken out the Free Trade ticket a feasible plan of multilateral disarmament and trade freedom, and to show at regular intervals how such agreements, if they were the reigning policy, would be reacting on employment and on the standard of life. The propaganda would be dignified and potentially authoritative. The voters of this country must have the contrast always before them—a constant reminder of what might be if an armistice were called and settlement made of the war which has been waged unceasingly since Versailles and which we entered four years ago.

To suggest that this renaissance might come from the skeleton Liberal Party which refused to break a pledge to the electorate after Ottawa is perhaps to invite scorn. Regarded historically, there have been more startling changes and chances than the uprising of a great political movement from the depths of party humiliation.

After Lord Snowden's speech in October 1931—there being a fortnight between it and Polling Day, during which its categorical assertions might have been qualified—Ottawa was, in terms of business agreements, a breach of contract deserving imprisonment. But as the default brought with it the glittering prizes, the many defaulted. Ottawa has helped to sift the place-hunters but has left a residue so small as to mean politically a new beginning. National Liberals and that forlorn band of wandering spirits, National Labour, seem, so far as their potency is involved in begetting a policy of their own, to be for the most part political eunuchs.

The Government, however, is being reinforced with a new intellectual vigour; as an example *Conservatism and the Future* is indeed a formidable symposium, but it is brilliance on the defensive. The chapter on Foreign Affairs by Messrs. Emrys Evans and Loder still pays its respects to a League system while mocking it.

'The actual fact is that international interests are created only by the identity of national interests.' That sentence hides the sting in Conservative foreign policy. From one point of view it is letting 'I dare not wait upon I would'. If the realism is tested it means that international interests will never be created in our time; if it is acted on it will be as effective a guillotine as the unanimity rule at Geneva. Only idealists expect the nations to obey the demands of their own interests or even recognize what they are and, when they have at last discovered them,



believe that they will immediately throw over a newly-won enlightenment. The Conservative seems to be satisfied with a unilateral faith: that of the strong man armed, acting as his own witness, counsel, judge and executioner. The interests of Great Britain must never be subordinated to some hypothetical, international interest; taking risks for war is never quite so dangerous as taking them for peace. The Conservative statesman tends to be resolute in a crisis but vacillating before it. Among some of the more brilliant members of the party will be found an enthusiasm which amounts almost to ecstasy when a big and difficult job has to be done.<sup>1</sup> But on the whole it is a complacent philosophy. It endures worms within the body politic as being one of life's necessary abuses, indeed, as being one of the signs of life.

## IV

Labour has picked on the economic worm and has admittedly made a very strong diagnosis.

'Briefly our analysis is,' said Mr. Attlee at Geneva, 'that production for profit inevitably leads to a struggle for markets. It is of the essence of capitalism as we know

<sup>1</sup> However, when Mr. Winston Churchill was speaking recently of certain aspects of our Foreign Policy claiming the attention of 'all sober-minded men', it must to some have called up a memory of the inner history of the strike crisis during 1912, when the gallant Home Secretary (sporting Liberal colours), while negotiation and compromise were the order of the day, was ready to divide the country off into military districts, and desperate efforts had to be made to get him out of what was called at the time his 'whiff of grape-shot' state of mind. Mr. Duff Cooper seems to be making a notable attempt to follow in his footsteps as a *littérateur* firebrand; but in spite of versatile talents he offers but a pale reflection of Mr. Churchill's genius and charm. In 1931 Mr. Duff Cooper was facing obloquy on behalf of the League of Nations Union in favour of Disarmament, now he is doing the same thing on behalf of the War Office in favour of Pacifism. It is, no doubt, if we only knew, all part of one increasing purpose.

it that it fails to distribute purchasing power among the masses of the workers in the country where it operates. The capitalist has to find a market for his production outside his own country. He exports goods as loans for the development of countries less advanced industrially than his own. The continuance of his system of production depends on finding ever fresh markets as the old ones become saturated, and sooner or later this brings him into rivalry with capitalists of other nations. In the struggle for markets and concessions the rival groups of interests enlist the support of their respective Governments, which is exerted by diplomacy and threats of war. Ultimately war breaks out. . . . Patriotism has become the last refuge of the profiteer.<sup>1</sup>

The emphasis on the financial blockade is entirely commendable in a civilization where there is an almost universal unawareness of economic values; but in one respect this very unawareness is undermining the pretension Labour must have—however much it is of and for the people—to be government by the people.

There are signs that Labour is attempting to short-circuit popular ignorance. Dr. Wallace concludes his searching commentary *The Passing of Politics* thus: 'In political society, the individual is constantly confronted with a series of choices with which he is unable and unequipped to deal. In the new economy, it is assumed that he is part of the social order, and belongs to it and not it to him; it is not a question of choice.'<sup>2</sup> In so far as the Labour Party is working towards such an objective, it is asking for an intolerable surrender, and offering in return no particular guarantee that human lives will be given a higher sanctity than under the present

<sup>1</sup> *Problems of Peace*, Ninth Series, pp. 98-9. 'The Socialist View of Peace.'  
<sup>2</sup> *The Passing of Politics*, p. 314.

regime of Big Business, exploiter and exploited. Papers like the *New Clarion* and the *Left Review* are effective journalism more as battle-cries and denunciads than as documents of brotherly love, and there is generally no conception that steadfast reform or even revolt is compatible with steadfast compromise. Mr. G. D. H. Cole is not in a strong position when he condemns the Labour administrations of 1924 and 1929.<sup>1</sup> For those Governments reflected the confusion of their intellectual background. In 1932 Mr. Cole was telling us at Oxford that the downfall of capitalism was imminent; last year he was asking us to remember that capitalism is tougher than it seems to be, and that we must all be prepared for a lengthy process of erosion.

It atrophies popular support to oversimplify a defenceless pacifism on the one hand and the fierce enforcement of sanctions on the other. Nevertheless, at his extreme Mr. Lansbury can command not only respect but also devotion. He brings the purifying atmosphere of primitive Christianity to a pagan House of Commons. I was present at the debate just before Sir John Simon left for his Berlin conversations with Herr Hitler. Mr. Lansbury's speech then was a glorious achievement of simple and direct ideas; a complete absence of straining after effect, but a modulation in his rich, lingering voice struck the note of authentic pathos. For he was at that historic moment not merely the leader of His Majesty's Opposition, he was the people's deputy. His conclusion was a reference to the bankruptcy of statesmanship, an attack on the notion that in some ways 'the evil of some one else may be our good, or that our good cannot be obtained unless it is at the cost of some one else. I do not

<sup>1</sup> See the revised edition of his *Short History of the British Working Class Movement*.

believe,' he went on, 'that anybody in any country really wants a war. I do not believe that there are any people who really enjoy killing. I know there are brutes in the world, but I am speaking of nations, and as Burke said, "you cannot indict a nation". The common ordinary people of the world want to live in peace and harmony with one another.'

But politically, like the militant Girondins, his power began and ended in the rostrum. He found himself in a hopeless minority in his party. He was thanked for his services and removed. 'Another ascent into the stratosphere', Low called it.

But the fact remains that Labour, above all parties, should be able to find room even at the head of its councils for the conscientious objector. Whatever the logical difficulties, conscientious objection, if it is fostered by a strong political organization, is a powerful and enduring moral stimulant. Presumably too, a lead from Labour in this country would encourage the secret but widespread Pacifist movements on the Continent to come more into the open. As far as day-to-day left wing policy is concerned, the gap between the extreme pacifist and the supporter of the rule of law must be narrowed to admit at least a temporary alliance. The extremist is concerned with the personal demand to take human life. In asking him to uphold the internationalist position no claim need be made upon his scruple. Politically his principles will lead him to abstain from the dangers of having a sanction enforced against him as well as of enforcing one for himself. Politically the alliance need not rule out preferences. A strain of the purest anarchy within a party programme is not inevitably a defect and might help to divert attention from elements that are pedestrian and even subnormal.

Labour, by casting Mr. Lansbury aside, was only carrying out the terms of capitulation to that most sombre of all dictatorships, the Trade Union Movement. On the analogy of the Liberals in 1911, the T.U.C. may indeed be called Labour's House of Lords. No organization encourages mediocrity with such persistence, no movement has quite such a short-sighted view of peace.

The clamour of its Sanctions jargon more than anything else led to the triumph of the 'Might is Right' faction within the Commons. A spasmodic and tardy gesture of punishment does not create law, but merely unilateral obligations, as the present war conditions in Egypt show for those who care to see; all of which Mr. Churchill did not hesitate to point out and profit from. Having provided the initial excuse for suicidal re-armament, the Labour barons seem likely to fall for the short-term benefits derived from contracts rather than to bother about ends that are bitter. As at present constituted, they merit the same reserved allegiance as any other vested interest. Their brusque and haughty indifference to Labour's party needs, combined with their contemptuous suspicions of the whole parliamentary system, makes their domination a serious obstacle to a sustained Opposition peace policy.

However, as Keith Feiling has put it, we are not 'kept awake by thinking of those Radical or Conservative Trade Unionists, who had made the Socialist party their avenue to usefulness and power, and who remind one of the Tsar's entry at his coronation preceded by his father's murderers and followed by his own. No, the real enemies are ideas; cosmopolitan, ancient, and infectious.'<sup>1</sup>

But six momentous years have elapsed to parade and

<sup>1</sup> Criterion Miscellany, No. 14. *What is Conservatism?* p. 27.

to discredit many of those ideas, to show that they mean as often as not the substitution of one hatred for another, of class war for capitalist war. Socialism as we see it in daily speeches still has about it much of the psychology of plunder. It was the response to the Goliath of social injustice, but its approach to Peace remains dragooned and militant.

## V

Nevertheless, whatever the quality we may attach to the triumphs and mishaps of Tolpuddledom, we must admit that the Labour Movement is sunk deep in our history. It is not imported or imposed as are the Communist or Fascist cults.

The belief that Moscow can give life to a political campaign here is as much an idle fancy as the attempt of the salons just before the 'Deluge' to impregnate Paris with Pekin.

Fascism, too, has one painfully foreign defect; it is humourless, it has not taken into account the taste of the British electors for banter. These quips are the outward and visible signs of long political experience, they are the correctives of crisis; and the temper behind them makes Blackshirts and even Greenshirts mere targets of absurdity.

During the great Hyde Park rally myriads of measly-looking men marched in fours to hear their Leader. In one rank three were particularly pale, while the man at the end was fat and full-blooded—*Voice in the crowd*: 'Whose been at my Enos?' At the other end of the scale is the sensitive Humbert Wolfe informing his audience that 'it would be no use sending me to a Concentration Camp: I never could concentrate'. Until Fascism gets the measure of tolerant pleasantry it may well remain a

chosen race whom few will choose, a minority that will fade away of pernicious anaemia.

However, the spread of Fascism raises the whole problem of Peace and War through parliamentary procedure. Its own plans are too crude to mean control over Whitehall, and after the first shock of dismissal the old officials would no doubt find their way back to their old rooms. But behind the bluster and the bureaucrats we must search for our evidence. It is significant that both Dr. Feiling and Dr. Wallace converge from their different standpoints upon a conception which, if it is valid, must profoundly modify all conventional peace policy.

'The economy of the new age,' according to Dr. Wallace, 'is bursting the bonds of the political organization of society and demands a new scheme of *social arrangements*';<sup>1</sup> and Dr. Feiling talks of to-day 'when there is no more franchise to be won and no more serious privilege to overturn, and when neither evils nor remedies lie in the purely political sphere. They are to be found, rather, in *social arrangement* and the public mind; . . .'<sup>2</sup>

The belief, however, still prevails that the Language of Politics though decadent is not a dead language, and that peace, whatever its subsequent derivatives, originates in its vocabulary. It is this belief that sustains the men who are trying to mould a middle party, a new parliamentary alignment to redress the balance of the old.

<sup>1</sup> *The Passing of Politics*, p. 304.

<sup>2</sup> *Criterion Miscellany*, No. 14. *What is Conservatism?* p. 30. In this and the previous quotation the italics are mine.

WE can in our generation teach the world the art of democratic government as our ancestors have done in the past. The man who claims to be a Pacifist will therefore be undeterred by the momentary revival of violence and dictatorship; he will certainly avoid permitting that revival to affect his own outlook. He will be tolerant, fearless, and filled by hope, not despair. He may differ from his friends and from his opponents, but he will neither hate them nor remove love out of his heart. He will above all things feel it more important to prove an idea to be right than a man to be wrong. No political party has ever yet appealed in this manner to the spirit and mind of the elector. It is an adventure which I think we ought now to undertake.

LORD ALLEN OF HURTWOOD:  
*Pacifism, its Meaning and its Tasks*  
(From *In Pursuit of Peace*)



### CHAPTER III

#### POLICY AND ACTION

##### LORD ALLEN OF HURTWOOD'S CHALLENGE

- I. Politics and Environment—Rational pacifism.*
- II. Lord Allen's political analysis—Deductions therefrom.*
- III. The Talk—Changes in opinion—Digression on Mr. Eden—Predictable League—Strong in Europe—Imperial heritage—Sir Norman Angell and Eritrea—Mandates—Hitler—Reach out.*
- IV. Conclusion—War prevention—Two caveats—Faith and Democracy.*

##### I

A CAR met me at Clandon Station, and for about half an hour I was driven through some of the most peaceful and abundant scenery in all the South of England.

There is the temptation to hover on this common heritage of our country's loveliness; when are we the profoundest patriots, when do our politics become merged in a richer meaning? To each man his own vision. ~

I have loved England best in high summer when we walked over the clear-cut ridge of the Downs from Alfriston to Beachy Head and back again, when Socialism was blended with the trilling of larks and drowned in a pint of beer at the end of the day; or riding bicycle and discussing war along the switchback lanes that lead from Cirencester into the squat grey-stone villages of the Chiltern country. After we had won the toss, I stood strongly for Non-Resistance, only to be interrupted by the Disaster of falling wickets. I was at once dropped in the slips, but after that played doggo till the dew was off. At lunch we were obsessed with leg-breaks. I drank deep of England's virtue on a howling November night in the tiny remote Dorset village of Alderholt. By 9.30 a score

of patient Liberals were still waiting in all the wind and rain for their election meeting, billed for 8.15. I was taken into a cycle shed; it was complete blackness. All I could see of my audience was the glow of pipes and cigarettes, and I shouted out International Goodwill and Disarmament above the roar of the gale and the clatter of a cloudburst on a tin roof. When I had finished one of the pipes spoke, 'Let's give the gentleman three cheers for coming out on a night like this to speak to us.'

These aspects of England undermine bitterness and take cruelty from argument. The journey from Clandon to Albury must be added to them, and with it the view from Lord Allen's house, which on a clear day spreads out thirty miles from Guildford to the sea.

Before our talk began he took me out on the roof. His house is built into a steep hill and is surrounded by woods which seem to fall away underneath it and quickly disappear before an endless chequer-board of fields. It was misty, but the view was to my mind even more spacious than that which draws so many pilgrims to Newlands Corner. It is, as Lord Allen pointed out, almost incredible that such grandeur and seclusion are to be found within thirty miles of London. I mention it not merely as a preliminary, for its effect must be to foster a tolerant and even a generous patriotism—not that Lord Allen himself needs such a stimulant to kindness, for, in spite of a long career involving him in bitter controversy and difficult personal decisions, he emerges as one of the most optimistic of our political free-thinkers.

He is a rationalist, but not in its classical eighteenth-century sense. According to Lord Allen, Reason can now become an effective dynamic political instrument in this age of modern scientific discovery. 'Science has now

made man the potential master of the natural world in which he lives. This has not only affected his capacity to handle *material* objects, but has influenced the working of his *mind*. Feeling himself now to be the master of nature, his mind is beginning to work rationally instead of superstitiously and to form opinions by observation and by the process of trial and error.<sup>1</sup>

Lord Allen is therefore constructive, in that he believes it to be the Pacifist's duty 'to use a style of political thought and action, which by avoiding meanness and passionate denunciation protects the mind of the listener from becoming closed, and increases its capacity for remaining open and receptive'.<sup>2</sup> His Pacifism, therefore, is even more than a cry for positive and immediate action. 'The method by which a Pacifist submits political propositions is quite as important as the nature of the propositions which he submits. . . . The stimulus of Reason opens the mind to observation, while that of passion closes it.'<sup>3</sup>

## II

Lord Allen has remained true to his principles, which may perhaps help to explain at once his isolation and his influence. Like so many other eminent men in England whom the Government, to its own perdition, allows to suffer political unemployment, he is isolated at the moment mainly because of his steadfast determination to keep to the *via media*. His hope is that all the progressive forces of Britain may come to accept the leadership of the Labour Party. But he believes that circumstances have combined to make an independent Labour

<sup>1</sup> Adapted by Lord Allen from *Pacifism, its Meaning and its Task*. (See *In Pursuit of Peace*. Ten addresses delivered at Oxford, July 1933. Ed. G. P. Gooch. Methuen. pp. 22 to 24.)

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

majority impossible for many years to come. This delay may prove dangerous, for events may during that time play into the hands of reactionary parties which will work upon the apprehensions of a public, feeling itself unable to find trustworthy leadership from the Left. In this way democracy might be imperilled before an independent Labour majority could be secured. Therefore Labour in this, as in other democratic countries, may have to win its ultimate leadership by accepting, during the period of transition, the aid of those millions of progressive votes which are represented by minority groups that have not yet come to a full belief in Socialism.

His view, as he told me, is that there is a minimum of six million votes for a left-centre party sufficiently comprehensive in its aims and courageous in its methods; the *raison d'être* of such a party and its appeal would be its fundamental respect for Liberty and active democratic leadership. Lord Allen has shown in *Britain's Political Future* that our two great party organizations both contain operative elements within them that flatter democracy only to rape it. Neither the Amery-Lloyd group, nor the Socialist League have any particular faith in constitutional delicacies in a time of crisis, the one time when that faith is put to the test. It is not the inadequacy, but the failure to make use of democracy, which is the challenge a left-centre party must take up.

Lord Allen would be the first to admit that we were not ready for this at the General Election at the end of last November. The magnitude of our defeat then is partly to be attributed to anomalies in the electoral system. But there were other potent causes; first the failure of the Labour Executive to inspire trust, to present its case with persuasive confidence or to submit its wider programme in terms of immediate priorities suitable to the

urgent needs of the moment. It should also have boldly come to terms with the independent Liberal Party; agreed non-intervention in certain constituencies should have been feasible, and the hostility of Labour is rather difficult to explain—as in the West, for instance—it bore no real relation to Opposition interests. Moreover, there was at the time no clear-cut or unanimous foreign policy to oppose to the National Government's devious and hesitating programme. Then, thirdly, the intervention of the Council of Action was premature and ill-tempered. The attempt to impose upon candidates a policy of such magnitude from outside the party system was likely to confuse rather than to inspire, not merely the candidates, but the electors as well.

Lord Allen himself and his friends were just about to launch the 'Next Five Years' as a regular political group though not as a new rival party. He told me they were not intending to put up candidates. He personally would like to see it work by the method of the League of Nations Union, to create opinion and frame a policy which might ultimately link the discontented left wing Conservatives and the Liberals under the leadership of constructive Labour.

'The electors,' he said, 'were never more willing to be led and never more prepared for the complete reorganization of our social system. All they ask is that they should be treated by politicians with respect and not played down to, and that left-wing statesmen should take the trouble to give the same leadership through democracy that is offered by dictators through tyranny. The British people will not surrender the principle of government by consent, but neither in a world of great dangers will they tolerate an advanced political theory whose advocates spend more time in threatening crisis than in explaining

the details of their programme in terms of the present. It was never more easy to uncover agreement for an immediate policy of action amongst thoughtful men and women in all the political parties.<sup>1</sup>

'If, therefore, democracy is to be preserved, those who hold advanced opinions must show in a calm and precise fashion how it can be used to give effect to far-reaching proposals.'

The crux of the problem seems to be whether all this democratic seething can be given coherence through co-operation with the small and battered remainder of Liberalism, for, however small and however battered, it offers the overwhelming advantage of a recognized Parliamentary group—the peculiarly English appeal of tradition and continuity—in fact, it provides just that technical pretext which can both *make acceptable* and encourage bold innovations.

### III

Lord Allen has influence. Mr. Gunther does not mention him, but it seems probable that private opinions of men such as he may have but recently played their part in certain momentous Government decisions. His visit to see Herr Hitler in January 1935 was of value, and he has been invited to discuss the problem of the Jews in Germany. He is very sensible that he must do all in his power to encourage the new generation to take over the responsibilities of democratic leadership, but both for the present and future it is his own peace opinions that matter most to us.

<sup>1</sup> See also *The Highway* of January 1936, for Lord Allen's challenging article 'Revolution by Consent', where he points to the technique of democratic leadership, as illustrated in Sir Samuel Hoare's Geneva Speech, making, 'a living political reality of an opinion which had been latent all the time'.

'I have two opinions I would stress,' he said, almost losing himself in a capacious arm-chair. 'First of all Pacifists must strive for an immediate policy. The time factor is too urgent for them to be content with a long-term policy and nothing more; it may necessarily have to be short-term. We are in danger of losing everything if we stand out for nothing but long-term idealism.

'From my own experience,' he added, lighting a huge pipe with all the loving deliberation of the experienced smoker, 'there have been the most significant changes of opinion since 1914. In these days opportunities are given to us to submit pacifist views to every kind of audience, and they are always listened to with sympathy and attention.' He had, for instance, been speaking a few days before in the town of Berkhamstead, where there is a typical Public School with the usual O.T.C. traditions—'But the Head Master was in the Chair, was most fair-minded, and there was obvious agreement with the constructive peace policy I outlined. I find it best, at public meetings in these days to point out that the international situation is really too complex to be discussed in the form of a demagogic speech, and that more will be gained, even in a great demonstration, from discussion and something approaching a lecture. This remark itself has often been received with applause. Audiences now wish to be taken seriously. I have spoken all over the country to many very different varieties of audience and am thus able to gauge the popular temper. There is greater concern and seriousness, a more intense anxiety to do the right thing than I have ever known, but unless this opinion is quickly harnessed it will probably snap back in fear. At the moment, opinion is in danger of becoming paralysed by uncertainties and suspicions; it is in an apprehensive state, therefore, even though a Pacifist,

I would not harass the Government because it undertakes re-armament, but would be vigilant to insist that this re-armament should be accompanied by a clear policy to create a workmanlike and strong League.'

I asked him later whether the personnel of the Government did not seem to belie any such intention. He stressed the need for optimism. He felt that Mr. Eden's views could be dominant. The new Foreign Secretary had unprecedented power, the whole country was behind him. 'I have watched him closely with profound respect and am convinced that he really does believe in the League system. Indeed, if he fails his political career would be jeopardized. Remember the Government would not easily withstand the resignation of another Foreign Secretary. During the next two years irrevocable action will have to be taken. It is essential to make the best of the only Government that is at present available and to strengthen Mr. Eden's influence as much as possible.'

This belief of Lord Allen and others in Mr. Eden is significant. Few English statesmen during the last hundred years have achieved such personal status and popularity and yet remained so fundamentally anonymous as Mr. Eden. His speeches are cultured, yet almost wholly devoid of the gestures of humour or finesse of oratory; but in general his gifts seem to be of the highest that our political aristocracy can offer to a world that always wonders at it. A complete absence of meanness and vulgarity on memorable scenes; reserves of dignity which impose themselves upon Continental effusion. It is to Mr. Eden's peace credit that he is an intellectual, and an aesthetic connoisseur and—however much Lady Houston may hate that kind of thing—a First in Oriental Languages and a collector of Cézanne. He seems to be



sufficiently sensitive and realist to understand that no amount of bombast during Peace can pay for human suffering during War. This, at least, seems to be the *motif* underlying his admittedly impersonal and dry language. During the War, I am told, he proved himself as a soldier to be a ruthlessly efficient administrator. His rise to glory is really a much more precarious romance than any the uniformed Dictators have woven round themselves. It all began with a report Mr. Baldwin wanted . . . however, he is up against influential and prejudiced enemies who probably hope that he may soon get into the same kind of diplomatic impasse that destroyed Sir Samuel Hoare, and who, on the assumption that Mr. Baldwin will retire in a year's time, believe that the Cabinet could take the strain of closing Mr. Eden's career in the meanwhile. In spite of the Rhineland crisis, there may well be greater dangers awaiting Mr. Eden near the Nile. As Lord Allen put it, 'Can he save the League by mobilizing British opinion at one and the same time in order to protect law and ensure equal justice both in Abyssinia and on the Rhine?'

Upon Mr. Eden's faith in the potency of international law as set up between sovereign national states, upon his physique to enforce that faith and to hold his own with eighteen-hour-a-day rulers of Europe must rest our immediate opportunity.

'In any case,' as Lord Allen pointed out, 'it is now simply useless to wish for a Labour Cabinet, which cannot possibly come into being in time.' Further, 'this Conservative Government with such a Foreign Secretary might be able to carry through the very measures calculated to strengthen the League—the fundamentals of a Labour programme—which in all probability would bring defeat upon a Labour Party if it only commanded

roughly a majority of twenty to thirty in the House. The reform of the Indian Constitution—if not entirely satisfactory—was a definite move in the right direction. To have put through that very same Constitution might have proved too great an undertaking for Labour and caused opponents to obstruct what they have now supported. Often the wisest policy is to try to convert and use the Right and Centre who have the immediate power at such critical moments.

‘We must stand for the full use of the collective system. It must not mean merely the reorganization of our own armaments, the substitution of new for obsolete weapons. They must be part of a collective system worthy of the name, organized and ready beforehand to be used for every emergency. If Sir Samuel Hoare had made his great speech committing Britain to the collective system three years ago, the peace of the world would not now be in peril.’

Lord Allen considers it was pitiful that Geneva was having to consider the potentialities of an oil embargo now after the crisis had come—the trade returns and all the figures were available, and he said that high officials at Geneva could have prepared an estimate many months before to cover the Italo-Abyssinian dispute if the Government had taken the initiative to give reality to the collective system. The Covenant must in future be predictable in practice and intention.

The second point Lord Allen stressed was that the League must be strong in Europe. It was the League’s European weakness that rendered it so ineffective in the Sino-Japanese dispute. The implications of this were disagreeable to many and the alternatives of Regional Pacts and bi-lateral agreements might appear more attractive, but Regional Pacts at best were only a form of diplomatic reinsurance and were not ultimately reliable.

‘Though we are bordered by the North Sea, we have been unable to keep completely free of a war in distant Abyssinia. In 1914 we were involved because of an attack upon Serbia, and between then and now there has come about the overwhelming development of aviation.

‘Europe must be viewed as a whole. Britain’s own safety requires that we shall in company with other states uphold law in Eastern as well as Western Europe. But this requires a new starting-point of absolute equality in the status of every country taking part. Despite all juridical difficulties caused by mistakes in the past, we must now in equity break free from existing inequalities between nations, even if they have been sanctioned by law, and then rigidly test the good faith of all those equal sovereign states by a demand that they shall all, henceforth, accept the obligations of the League system in Europe. The nation that refuses will then be revealed as the enemy of society.’

Perhaps the gravest difficulty in the way of this country’s full acceptance of League responsibilities was our Imperial heritage. ‘It is so easy for other nations to reproach us,’ Lord Allen said, ‘for the conduct of Francis Drake and all the buccaneers who did their bit in beginning to seize the Empire for us centuries ago. However unsatisfactory it may be for nations to rule over other races, it is now true that so long as some areas are supposed to be incapable of self-government, we seem to do it better on their behalf than most of our neighbours.’ Lord Allen suggested that the arbitrary handing over of mandated territories would cause dismay among their inhabitants. Moreover, when we considered statistics, in nearly every case the arguments of the unsatisfied Powers break down.

'Our own population trend is inwards and not outwards. Just before the War there were more Germans in Paris than in Tanganyika.' He quoted Sir Norman Angell's trenchant comments on Italian settlement in Eritrea.<sup>1</sup> According to Sir Norman, 'After fifty years of ownership, in the 2,000 square miles of territory in Eritrea, most suitable for European residence, there were at the last census just about four hundred Italians. . . . Of the whole Italian population, numbering less than 5,000, over 3,000 were returned as residents of the capital, and when we have deducted Government employees, children under ten, we find the total Italian population engaged in agriculture to be eighty-four persons. If Italy manages to plant in Abyssinia the same proportion of whites to natives that exist in Africa as a whole, she might manage to find room at the most for some 20,000 Italians. Multiply by ten, and the population question has not been touched.'<sup>1</sup>

'It is clear,' said Lord Allen, 'that the solution of this vast problem can only be found in the method of the international rather than the national mandate. In trade relations the unsatisfied Powers have no real grievance against us as far as purchasing raw materials is concerned; in fact, we are only too glad to be offered prices for them. Moreover, it is only during the last four years that we have abandoned Free Trade.

'Thus, what is troubling the unsatisfied Powers is really a matter of emotion. I don't know whether you listened-in to the King's broadcast at Christmas, but it was to my mind a very moving affair. The voices of simple people speaking from all parts of the Empire; then the climax of the King to his people. This is really what Germany wants, not to be given Colonies for the

<sup>1</sup> Article in *The Spectator*, Sept. 20, 1935, p. 421.

arguments used, but to be associated like us with a family throughout the world.

‘The whole problem of this aspect of European discontent’, according to Lord Allen, ‘requires at this moment, not so much hard and fast solutions, as a procedure which shows that we are willing for it to be examined. We do not want a World Conference which, through lack of preparation and an over-ambitious programme, is likely to get lost in its terms of reference. Rather, we want to set up fact-finding Commissions to prepare an agenda of heads—Colonies, Tariffs, Minorities, etc.—including both the satisfied and unsatisfied Powers. Committees representative of all nations should be appointed to inquire into the reality of the various grievances and to set the table for their discussion.’

During tea and honey toast, Lord Allen told me of his visits to Germany and of his conversation with Herr Hitler. Hitler seemed to him to be ruthless and ascetic. It was our first and foremost duty to accept his offer of good faith and act upon it. ‘Let us first make this remarkable man and his people feel that we understand and recognize that we have some responsibility for their problem. And then when we all confront each other as equals, let us test the good faith—our own as well as that of the Germans—by calling upon each other to accept identical obligations so as to ensure that new agreements are kept. If the law is to be honoured for the future, all must be equal before it, and when all are equal each of us must provide the means for protecting the law. This is the real challenge we must put to Herr Hitler. It is one also that we must put to ourselves, for we have far too frequently evaded our own obligations to sustain the collective system. Let the challenge be answered favourably, and then French fears can at last be allayed.’

There was one Nazi complaint in particular he felt he could not rebut. 'Our national status is circumscribed and inequalities imposed, young Nazis argue, because of the conduct of a generation that is now dead. And yet, the present generation in militant Japan commits acts of aggression, does so with impunity and is admitted to equality in armaments and to equal powers of negotiation to Naval Conferences and the like.'

Our talk ended with Lord Allen referring to his own political experience over twenty-five years and of his attitude in 1914.—'I might find myself in such a position again; but because I was compelled then to be merely negative, I am all the more eager now to be constructive when the circumstances are so different and offer opportunity for constructive thinking. I want to do all I can to put away the minority mind; even if we must still be faithful to our minority views. Our mission is to reach out from the minority, to take our message to the unconverted.'

#### IV

It would enlighten those who still harbour lurid prejudices against Conscientious Objectors to meet Lord Allen. They would be able to realize first-hand that courage is not simply a matter of physique or fighting, but of faith in common sense and generosity. He is helping to give pacifism a political emphasis. He does not rule out war-resistance, but he subordinates it to the principle that 'War is not something we want to resist, but something we want to prevent'. This means facing the fact that for the present the world adopts the use of armed force, even if we deplore it. He said to me, 'even if we ourselves will not fight and wish to go without armaments, at least let us pay respect to a generation

which has gone far beyond 1914, and has now determined that force shall in future be put behind law and no longer used anarchically in self-judged right. We must understand public opinion which is not yet aware of security apart from battalions.'

But surely Under-Secretaries use this language to gild the pill of Service Estimates, and do not droves of Tories come to a similar understanding? They do, but with a difference. For they believe that they can prevent war by making Great Britain sufficiently powerful to win it. Lord Allen pays respect to a new world still adhering to force, because that force can now be the foundation of law, for he believes the opportunity has come to us as to no other generation to turn the rule of law from an ideal into a *fait accompli*.

In two respects I feel there is need for caution. For Lord Allen's single-mindedness and optimism are intoxicating.

First, for many who lack his intellectual grasp the attempt to make the best of existing political material may well involve a permanent process of readjustment before a steadily deteriorating situation. I find grave difficulty in believing that men who are responsible for the White Paper on re-armament can be prevailed upon, either by influence or threats, to subordinate it to the demands of an international system. Tariffs, like tyrannies, are soothing drugs for political or economic *malaise*, but when the first effect wears off, re-armament remains as the only remedy. The excuses of our Government for re-armament are those of the addict in an advanced stage. An inquiry might with advantage be made and published to recommend alternative plans covering those areas of unemployment mentioned in the White Paper which will be based, not upon the *status quo* but upon a considerable measure of disarmament. If we acted unilaterally,

on the basis of the Hoover Plan, we would still, it seems, have more forces at our command than are required for international commitments.

Secondly, and finally, if the League is to be strong in Europe it must be something more than a reflection of French foreign policy. As Professor Zimmern has pointed out, 'for the French the League, or any collective system, signifies a concentration of power against an aggressor state, whereas to us it represents something resembling our own decentralized Commonwealth, a group of states co-operating together, because they are animated by mutual goodwill.'<sup>1</sup> This French conception seems to mean no more than an automatic and universal defence of France against the possibility of German attack. If the Italian, Paraguayan or Japanese Governments are aggressor states, then logic takes the place of law. The subtlest warning made at the time<sup>2</sup> of the Peace Treaties came, significantly enough, from a distinguished Frenchman, Leon Bourgeois: 'If too much power is given to the Great Powers, they will act rather for peace than for peace founded on justice.' This warning has been justified, and largely because of the subsequent combination of French hegemony and British acquiescence within the Councils of the League. A reality for British statesmanship to grasp is, that though French co-operation is an integral part of European settlement, French initiative is not.

It seems to me, accordingly, that Lord Allen's policy may find itself during the next few months while searching for a legal foundation yet unable fully to conform with the official judgments of the League. This apparent contradiction between facts and formulae, the spirit and the

<sup>1</sup> Sir Alfred Zimmern in the *Contemporary Review*, June 1934.

<sup>2</sup> February 4, 1919.



letter of the new European understanding, can be reconciled. But the settlement will endure only if Great Britain can confront the world with a Government that is National, not merely in its name—a Government that symbolizes a true renaissance in Democracy.

Lord Allen quotes<sup>1</sup> a conversation he had with 'a distinguished foreigner from a small nation, Holland. "Can you in Britain not see," he said, "what it would mean to all of us smaller countries in Europe, if you would put a Government into power that would come out boldly with an immediate policy to save Democracy and world peace? We little nations are in grave peril; you are the pioneers of Democracy. We beg you once more to save that ideal, for no one else can do it." '

<sup>1</sup> In *Britain's Political Future*, p. 189.

You will perhaps feel disposed to criticize me for being too theoretical, too idealistic, shall we say, for a practical world. It is true that I have spoken of principles. But they are not abstract principles. They are treaty obligations. It is the business of statesmen to find practical means of giving effect to principles which they have accepted, and it is not justifiable or statesmanlike to abandon principles whenever you find them inconvenient. I say this of our own country as much as of Japan.

THE EARL OF LYTON:

*Speech at Manchester University, 1934*

## CHAPTER IV

### FAR EAST

#### THE EARL OF LYTTON EXPLAINS

I. 'Black Out'—The significance of statistics—The greatest of the Crises—Arnold Toynbee's Warning, 1915—Brands of Nationalism—What is at Stake—The Earl of Lytton's position.

II. Morning talk with the Earl of Lytton—Council procedure—Forced solutions—Russia and Japan—Isolation.

III. Afternoon talk with the Earl of Lytton—Development of Nationalism in China—Japanese Imperialism—Naval parity with Japan—American neutrality and Conclusion—Abyssinia and Manchukuo.

IV. Contacts—Films and the Press—The League, National and Financial backing—Peter Fleming and F B I.—The Report.

#### I

FOR the European public the Far East is not so much a problem as 'a black out'. The belief that 'Asia Minor is somewhere to the left-hand side of China' has sufficed. While Mr. Milne's *Table of Comparative Deaths*, beginning with 'ten million deaths from famine in China=(in horror) 100,000 deaths from earthquake in Sicily', shows perhaps most clearly why the East, as against the other compass points, has been dubbed Far. The problem is one of psychological rather than physical distance, and the temptation is to imagine the Yellow Races as humanity in the abstract, or as millions which alternately seethe and teem.

We cannot remind ourselves too often of what in terms of bare statistics we have been dismissing. The area of China proper is about 1,532,000 square miles, and its population over 414 millions; but, significantly enough, if Tibet, Chinese Turkestan and Mongolia are added,

although the area of land is more than doubled, the population only goes up another thirteen millions. The foreign colonies in China were estimated in 1930 at about 362,000. Of them, about 255,000 were Japanese, 65,000 Russian and 13,000 British.

The Japanese Empire is contained in four large and about 4,000 small islands, the population being over eighty-three millions and the area approximately 260,000 square miles. Only about one sixth of this area is available for cultivation.

Manchuria is as large again as Japan, and roughly as large as France and Germany put together. The total population is approximately thirty millions, and of them twenty-eight millions are Chinese, 150,000 Russians and 230,000 Japanese.

These figures underlie the most authentic crisis in the modern world, at once our most urgent and prolonged danger and our most notable opportunity.

In so far as it is danger I submit that it goes deeper than the stylized and now almost meaningless enmity between Germany and France. As Dennerly has shown, there is no valid economic case for tension on the Rhineland, and I always feel that the psychological reasons—the difference in French and German temperaments, invasion memories—are somewhat suspiciously allied to the sentimental traditions of diplomacy and the desires of General Staffs. In the Manchurian crisis however, quite apart from grave economic necessities, —Bankwitz has summarized them as ‘a vicious spiral’<sup>1</sup>—

<sup>1</sup> In a speech before the I.L.O. at Geneva he said that Japan and China were now fighting Europe with hot-house methods. Japan was herself threatened by the even cheaper labour allied to machinery in China and elsewhere. Stern necessity was forcing Japan to expand her export trade and seek markets wherever she could find them. Mr. Bowle, of Hong Kong, who followed him suggested the relation between trade and the flag. Japanese goods should be boycotted

we have at stake nothing less than rival conceptions of civilization.

We were warned. Arnold Toynbee in his monumental *Survey Nationality and the War*, published in all the turmoils of 1915, made what was for that time a bold and remarkable prophecy. 'The first ripples of Chinese immigration are already striking upon the East Indies, Australia and the Pacific sea-board of North America, and the brutality with which these States are repelling this peaceful, casual invasion shows how terribly they dread the pressure to come. Forcible exclusion will succeed for the present, because China still lies in the grip of a thousand years' political paralysis; but the power of movement is already returning to her limbs. The fundamental factor of world-politics during the next century will be the competition between China and the new commonwealths. China will strive to reorganize her national life and to bring all her immeasurable latent strength to bear on the effort to win her "place in the Sun" (a more titanic struggle this than Germany's present endeavour).'<sup>1</sup>

However much the Washington Treaty represented an attempt to impose the ideal of the League Covenant upon the East, the subsequent policy of the Western Powers did not prove sufficiently sustained or unanimous to preserve it. Chinese Nationalism is finding little in the Western finished product to undermine its original faith in cultural self-help. Japanese Nationalism, on the other hand, has been more openly influenced by European

altogether. This was rightly the only remedy, the remedy which any government with any guts in it would enforce.

<sup>1</sup> Arnold Toynbee, *Nationality and the War*, p. 333. In the paragraph immediately preceding he looks to Mongolia and Turkestan as 'Russia's field of expansion for the twentieth century. She has to fill these immense empty territories with the white populations their temperate climate invites, and the achievement of the task will be a race against time.'

upheaval in the search for a stable Government. As long ago as 1872, some years before we knew of them in terms of good comic opera, the Japanese made education compulsory. 'Knowledge and learning shall be sought after,' declared the Emperor Meijé, 'throughout the whole world, and thus the foundation of the Empire shall be extended.' Accordingly, before 1914 Japan reflected Prussianism, after 1918 reflected the triumph of Democracy—for the first time a commoner became Prime Minister; and the rash gift of full manhood suffrage followed closely the first Socialist Administration in England; by 1931 it reflected the disillusionment of Democracy and the zeal for militant despotisms. But while China has tended to shun and Japan to imitate the Western technique, the most serious symptom is, as Sir Frederick Whyte pointed out, 'that the moral prestige of the whole Western world is under a cloud; and we stand to-day at a turning-point where there is a marked disposition in Asia to seek salvation in its own traditions.'<sup>1</sup>

The situation in Manchuria had probably got out of control several years before the League was asked to take official cognisance of the technical breach of Treaties. There was in particular the glaring though virtually unnoticed defect that neither China nor Japan had bound themselves under the Optional Clause. However, in the attempt to find facts and apply a remedy, the Commission of Inquiry under the chairmanship of an Englishman, the Earl of Lytton, produced what was perhaps the most judicially comprehensive and politically constructive Report of our times. The very recommendations of that Report might well have supplied the excuse for subsequent inaction: instead, they remain until something decisive

<sup>1</sup> See *In Pursuit of Peace*, p. 85 Sir Frederick Whyte's lecture on the 'Problems of the Far East'.

can be done about them, an accusation and a warning to Europe.

Few men so responsible for world events have the same justification as Lord Lytton to be harsh and embittered at the turn they have taken since 1933. Few have the same right to denounce or wash their hands of our dilemma. But to meet him is at once to set aside any thoughts of Achilles' tent, and to talk with him soon introduces the idiom which may perhaps be most fairly compared with that of a judge summing up—the blend of authority, caution and quiet dignity. He is meticulous and deliberate in the use of his words, and upon these matters of high policy seems almost to imply that his comments are to be treated like a judge's, the dicta separated from the more formal decision.

He was good enough to see me at the Athenaeum Club, first at midday and then at five o'clock. Both talks lasted for about half an hour. In the morning he spoke slowly and with emphasis, while in the afternoon he answered certain questions I put to him in a freer and more confidential manner. I should point out that the talks took place a few days before the Government assassinations in Tokyo, and having heard Lord Lytton stress the feudal mysteries of Japan's internal politics, I found it easier to absorb the first shock of the news.

## II

### MORNING TALK.

He took me to the huge first-floor lounge of the Athenaeum, and chose a settee in the corner of the room, with our backs to a solitary member on the horizon at the other end of it. I asked somewhat abruptly, as no appreciable preliminary ice had been broken, whether he

felt the Lytton Report could have been a basis of settlement if the British Government had taken a bold lead at Geneva in supporting its recommendations. He replied that the Report could have been effective, 'but it does not depend upon a single country'. He thought that the procedure at Geneva was wrong. The procedure was determined by the Chairman, who happened to be Mr. de Valera, not an experienced League man. Though, no doubt, he had official advice he was probably mistaken.

'When the Council met to consider the Report the first thing the Chairman did was to call on the Chinese and Japanese representatives to give their opinions. There followed a prolonged wrangle lasting for months; both representatives slanged each other with increasing vehemence and got farther away from terms of settlement. The Japanese became more and more impatient. Then at the Assembly the same thing happened all over again. Finally, Japan, who had been led to believe that the League would find a face-saving formula, was affronted by the League pulling out all the aggressive articles which had been buried within the Report. This left Japan no option but to withdraw. The recommendations were not considered, and never have been.

What the Chairman should have said was: 'We have a document of two parts. I propose no discussion of fact. That has been handled by the Commission which has had access to all officials, witnesses and documents. If there had not been any doubt as to the facts, there would have been no need to send a Commission to the Far East. Nobody else, then, is competent to discuss the facts: the only question we have to ask is—Do we accept this part of the Report? Having accepted what is their business and not ours, we will now discuss what is our business



and not theirs, namely, what is to be done.' If this procedure had been adopted, Lord Lytton believed that it would have been virtually impossible for Japan to withdraw. She could have found no valid excuse to do so. 'There should have been a discussion of what was to be done based upon the facts received. The League has never done this, but instead has passed censure on Japan while acquiescing in her subsequent acts; a deplorable situation.'

Lord Lytton preferred that we should not criticize Japan at all, but that our first aim should be to find a solution. Further, he stressed that he was not undertaking to criticize the League; he was merely putting forward his private opinion that there would have been better chance of the League finding an acceptable solution for the Far Eastern problem if, instead of allowing China and Japan to wrangle, it had initiated negotiations.

I was beginning to ask about the effect of America's policy in the Pacific, but he said there was a further point he wished to explain. 'I do not believe,' he continued, 'in forced solutions. Whatever kind of force is used it cannot be permanent or a basis of peace if it is not freely accepted by the persons concerned. I am not prepared to acquiesce in forcing a solution on Japan any more than to acquiesce in Japan's conduct to China. The solution must be acceptable to China, to Japan, to Russia, to the United States, to us, indeed, to the whole world. This attitude affects the entire technique of handling political questions. If you use the League to punish Japan, you at once make Japanese opinion stiffen against you, but if the object of the League is quite simply to find a solution acceptable to both parties it will have a better chance of success. This may seem to be an ideal and impracticable. Perhaps it is. If so, then it is only left to the League to refuse to

acquiesce in a solution in violation of Covenant pledges. Even in the Far East I do not think it is impossible to convince Japan that she could get all she wants at less price than she will have to pay for it through her present action.

'Japan's chief fear is Russia. Nothing is more likely to bring war with Russia than the policy she is adopting at the moment. It would be far safer for Japan if an independent Manchurian State intervened between herself and Russia, thus precluding any meeting-place there. If Japan is at war with Russia, the lines of communication will certainly be vulnerable—a hostile China to the south, a hostile population in Manchukuo, and of course the Russian army on the other side. So Japan is likely to be in the greatest danger from a strategic point of view. Now, Japan's claim is that she wants Manchukuo's raw materials for her industries. This should not be difficult to provide. The economic aspect of the problem presents little difficulty. It is the political aspect that is the real obstacle to a settlement. All the Japanese, whether Liberals or Extremists, want to dominate and control Chinese policy there, and even dominate and control all North China. This last claim is incompatible with China's or any one else's interest.' Lord Lytton thought, however, that it would be possible to ensure a Government in Manchuria in which the Japanese could predominate.

'It might be asked—is the Manchukuo army adequate to ward off attacks? As at present constituted it is not adequate to resist the Chinese, much less a Russian army, but if a State were set up whose independence were guaranteed, like Switzerland, then the Manchukuo troops would be quite capable of maintaining internal order. They could keep down banditry and internal breaches

of the peace, but everything has gone badly for such a step.'

A footman with a card on a silver tray bowed over him and reminded him of another appointment—'However, it is not possible for a country to exist in the modern world on a policy of isolation.

'To the country that defies the Covenant it must be put clearly, "You have broken your word, you are a country without credit, political or moral; we trade with you as a people we do not trust, on a cash basis". We should say to the Japanese: "You have gone about a thing in the wrong way. We want to help you to a solution which will be permanent and consistent with your interests within the framework of the Covenant."''

### III

#### AFTERNOON TALK.

The room and the settee were now full of members and there was the usual Club whispering. Upon these murmurs Lord Lytton smote, ordering tea in a loud voice and speaking the whole time very distinctly so that quite a number of eminent men must have left the Athenaeum better informed than when they came into it! He invited me to ask him questions. But some of the opinions he freely put forward were confidential in that they were not intended as formal statements for literal reproduction in a book. I will attempt here only to summarize the main points he made:

*The Development of Nationalism in China:* This was limited by a variety of factors. In China the soldier's is not an honourable profession. To become a soldier was to sink to the lowest social level. Any beggar with some sort of a weapon might qualify to become one. This

helps to modify the statement that China has four million men under arms; for most of these men have no particular allegiance, and are at the disposal of the highest bidder to fight or to run away for him! Accordingly, with sufficient material resources any one can become a War Lord.

The situation is made more anarchic by the scourge of Communism, which takes the form in China of sporadic raids upon property, involving often the murder of the owner; the booty is then shared, not only among the raiders, but also with the local peasants, who then give active support to the Communist leaders, but in the hope of more plunder rather than from any political faith.

China is largely governed by personalities. He mentioned T. V. Sung 'who is a really great financier' and is now Governor of the Bank of China.

The outstanding man is Chiang Kai Shek. He is well educated. He and his wife are Christians and have come under the influence of the Group Movement. He is in command of the biggest and best trained force in the country. In some ways he is parallel to Cromwell attempting to set up his New Model Army, for he has great moral purpose and demands of his troops high ideals and strict self-discipline. His policy has been, and continues to be, one of deference to Japan. He is a military realist and is aware that although his army is already the most powerful in China it is as yet no match for the Japanese forces. It was this realism that had helped to bring about the recent noticeable decline in the influence and the prestige of the students. They demanded that Chiang Kai Shek should take a strong line against Japan. He suggested that they should try to do it themselves, and was willing to give them all the assistance he could. But there were no volunteers. There is evidence that the domination of the American-educated

Chinese is passing. Chiang Kai 'Shek himself' owes nothing to American training.

Lord Lytton pointed to two disintegrating influences, the one a universal symptom and the other peculiar to Chinese temperament. There was, first, the element of rivalry; the men who made the Revolution were jealous of Chiang Kai Shek's increasing authority. This was always the fate of Republican Governments, this haunting dread of a powerful man developing into a Duce, a Führer, or Emperor. It could be seen in France. Constitutionalists of the north and the Cantonese in the south tended to regard Chiang Kai Shek's activities with mistrust.

Secondly, there was the Chinese attitude to the time problem. Their temperaments were adjusted to a different sense of time. They were satisfied with the argument that, like the Mongols, all the Japanese in Manchuria would be absorbed in about two hundred years. This is contrary to a national spirit—even though it is probably true—and is generally not conducive to getting things done. Further, opinion in China is unreliable. At the moment it is almost universally anti-Japanese, but only a few years ago it was directed against Great Britain.

*Japanese Imperialism:* This was more political than economic. He referred to the obscurity of the political situation in Japan. There was serious unrest, but the inhabitants of Japan were probably as much in the dark as the rest of the world. On the whole, the alignment was the Army and the Country parties standing for stern patriotism and purity of public life versus the politicians and financial interests.

He had mentioned that about two years ago Chiang Kai Shek had had a serious illness, and had emphasized how China's destiny was bound up with his good health;

in Japan, too, much depended 'upon the thin thread of a single life'—that of Prince Saionje, the last of the Elder Statesmen, who was somewhere between ninety and one hundred years old. He always remained much in the background, but he had access to the Emperor's ear and was opposed to the militarists.

*Naval Parity with Japan:* We should always keep in mind its implications. Japan was naturally enough seeking a cheap equality which would mean in fact immense superiority. Japan had only two sea-boards to the many we had to defend. He regretted that Japan had been invited to make another naval treaty before the political situation in the Far East had been discussed.

*American Neutrality:* The American policy of isolation does not extend to the Far East. America was ready, he felt, to take a decisive part in bringing about a settlement. Then speaking in more general terms he stressed the need for firm Anglo-American co-operation and for avoiding policies which, while paying lip-service to Anglo-American friendship and the effective League system, were in fact not fully consistent with either. He felt it was the Government's duty to inform the electorate (roughly in the same way as the League of Nations Union does) that we are signatories to a Covenant by which we are automatically in a state of war with a nation that violates the territory of another nation, and to find out whether the obligation was fully realized and supported.

On the whole, Lord Lytton's view was that the situation in the Far East was more hopeful than its League counterpart in Abyssinia. He admitted that the policy of stopping Italy from making the expedition at all could have been carried through without risk—there was ample warning of Mussolini's intentions—and that no such precaution could have been taken in Manchuria; yet now,

while Italian honour seemed to be too deeply involved to allow of any way out, there existed in the Far East the possibility of an equitable and enduring solution.

## IV

The barriers of European indifference will assuredly break down before the colossal pressure of events in the Far East, but it must be admitted that the cultural and geographical separation which has made it so difficult for us to appreciate the nature of Amharic rule in Abyssinia compels a like oblivion before the intrigues of the Kuomintang in China, the subtleties of the Minobe heresy or Tenrikyo revivalism<sup>1</sup> in Japan. The lack of wireless contact tends to keep Tokyo and Nanking in the realms of fable.

For the most part we have little other than caricature to draw on. The Russian films, such as *Storm over Asia* put across all the intensity of photographic effects but—and this is always the curse of Soviet propaganda—are intellectually out of focus. Hollywood and our own film industry cannot be prevailed upon to give us more than *Shanghai Nights* or *China Seas*, Fu Manchus and sinister nasal chants, as much a travesty of Eastern life as the traditional Limehouse is of London. The Film News Bulletins every now and again show the same rather boring pictures of military manœuvres to which is added the usual technical thrill—the beating of drums, the clarion voices, ‘War Clouds in the East!’ ‘Does Japan

<sup>1</sup> Tenrikyo is one of the new spiritual offshoots of the ancient Shinto faith. It has eight million adherents. According to Guenther Stein, ‘the chief doctrine of the teaching is that Japan is the centre of the world and that—an admission unique in Japanese religions—all nations are equally children of the Father and therefore given the blessings of the true (Tenrikyo) faith’. See *The Spectator* of August 20, 1935.

Mean War?' etc. It is a significant fact that Havas which feeds the French Press with world news has as its sole source for China the Japanese agency Rengo.

The Yellow Peril has no fixed abode, but its spiritual home is still in Fleet Street. Too many of the links in the chain that must bind East and West together are faulty or have been tampered with.

Politically and economically the League has done pioneer work. Its record of relief in China is probably its greatest constructive achievement. Both the Lytton Report and Lord Lytton's comments testify to the potential moral strength of the League as soon as it acts automatically under a clearly defined code, and is in fact, as Lord Allen has asked of it, 'predictable'.

Without going to the dogmatic lengths of Mr. Simmonds and Mr. Emeny, in their scholarly thesis *The Price of Peace*, which so temptingly divides the world between the Haves and the Have-nots, or challenging Lord Lytton's assertion that no one Government could have materially affected the League's conduct, it seems that the League has had to plod along the road of economic readjustment without the support of its most influential members.

National Industry sufficiently powerful to influence the National Executive means a scramble for short-term benefits and the sabotage of reforms on a large scale. The League may well have been disappointed with Sir John Simon's success in saying in half an hour on Japan's behalf what Mr. Matsuoka had tried to say during ten days, but the real sting was whether or no Sir John Simon was reflecting at that time the sentiments of the Federation of British Industries.

Peter Fleming referred in a *Times* article of March 1935 to a brief visit of an F.B.I. mission to Manchuria which enabled its members to discern 'a substantial outlet for



British enterprise', and he proceeded to show that even if the mission did receive 'written assurance that the principle of British collaboration in the development of Manchuria was definitely established', this apparently slick opportunism had less real substance than the ideal of a general plan of widespread settlement. He concluded, 'the last way for Great Britain to strengthen her position in the Far East is to give Japan reason to believe that we share her impatience of Treaty Obligations'; by 'a descent, however dignified from the high horse ridden at Geneva since 1931', we should earn 'only contempt, and not affection', from the Japanese military realists, and, 'incidentally, in recognizing Manchukuo, lose both face and trade in China'.

No attempt to settle the deep-rooted difficulties in the Far East can afford to ignore the Ten Conditions, the machinery of negotiation and the separate Treaties set up in the Lytton Report. The Japanese dismissed nine of the Conditions because they could not be practicably applied in the absence of the tenth, namely, a strong central Government in China. But the main features of the Japanese Statement to the League are that it protests too much, and that through its irritability it helps Japan to join the other nations of the world in ignoring the constructive purposes of the Report. The tenth Condition admits the weakness of the Nanking Government, but calls upon International and presumably Japanese co-operation to deal with it. Political realism is not synonymous with letting what can be wait upon what is.

Lord Lytton's Report is filed in the various Governments' archives, but it is surely a more enduring precedent for world peace than countless solemn and ephemeral contracts hatched out of hatred and ratified with Judas kisses.

It never occurred to our worthy professorial imparters of knowledge that anything as vast as the British World Empire could have been assembled and kept together merely by swindling and underhand methods. The few who gave warnings were either ignored or silenced. I remember distinctly the amazement on the faces of my comrades in arms when we came face to face with the Tommies in Flanders. After the very first days of fighting, it dawned on the brain of each man that those Scotsmen did not exactly correspond with the people whom writers in comic papers and newspaper reports had thought fit to describe to us.

I began to reflect then on propaganda and the most useful forms of it.

ADOLF HITLER: *My Struggle*

## CHAPTER V

### GERMAN PEACE

*I have been supplied with the following detail of Major-General Karl Haushofer's career*

*Born 1869; commanded for two years' service in the Japanese Imperial Army for studies. Travelled in Europe, Japan, Korea, China, India and Russia, General in the Bavarian Royal Army.*

*Professor of Geography at the University of Munich. President of the Deutsche Akademie, Munich. Editor of the Zeitschrift für Geopolitik (periodical for geopolitics).*

*Specializing in Geography, Geopolitics, Strategic Geography, Japanology, Population-Polity, Problems of the Germans abroad.*

*I need only add that it was my request that the article should include extracts from Herr Hitler's public declarations, and should be in some ways a commentary upon them*

“TRUCE OF GOD OR FALSE DAWN?”

By MAJOR-GENERAL KARL HAUSHOFER, D. PHIL.  
MUNICH

TRUE peace is a gift of God, which is longed for by the tortured people and hoped for by us soldiers who have experienced four years of fighting. In spring the German Chancellor stretched open hands towards this true peace, seeking reciprocity—not a piece of paper with questions or a false Dawn.

A peace which is not genuine is, like the conflagrations, mass murders and plagues which sweep across the earth, the work of the devil. Since Wilson's Fourteen Points have been disregarded, we Germans, together with the Hungarians, Bulgars and Turks, have experienced the insincerity of the many treaties made in the neighbourhood of Paris. Since the Turks have substituted the imitation porcelain of Sèvres for the honest hardware of Lausanne, and since the others tore piece after piece from

the treaties they had signed, it was only from us that the eternal rights of mankind were withheld by iron fists.

This was the way in which the Germans looked upon what had happened to them. But we will quote Massingham, as he lifted his voice courageously in 1919: 'Can any Power in Europe have the right to exploit a military victory against another, with such a series of tortures, requisitions and inquisitions; the right to rob that country of millions of her people and much of her land, of half her coal-fields and three-quarters of her iron ore, of all her ocean liners, her colonies, her rights of trade and traffic abroad, the right to dispose of her industrial products, the free use of her railways, and thus to destroy her saving capacity and to limit her working power? Who gave such a Power the right over Life and Death? What conception of civilization or morals will be furthered by this? Under the pressure of the Treaty of Paris Germany has ceded every political right of her people, including the right of mankind to self-respect, the necessity of which is deeply implanted in every nation.'

That is not a German voice from the days of deep despair, but the voice of a free Anglo-Saxon, Mr. W. Massingham, in the *Nation*, New York (24.5.1919). It shows the immense distance of such a false peace, which wherever it was enforced in Central Europe was known as the 'peace of shame' or the 'peace of coercion', from the offers of the Chancellor, which culminated in the peace suggestions of March, but which form together a connected series of efforts towards the construction of a harmonious peace. The depth from which these efforts arose, and the great exertion which roused the Chancellor to such efforts, is again attested by an Anglo-Saxon. Gilbert Reid, in his sympathy with China (*China Captive or Free?* 1921) remarks in an aside: 'Any other people

except the Germans which had been faced with such a terrible, universal and many-sided mass of compulsory rules as the Treaty of Versailles imposed upon Germany, would have been discouraged and have lost heart. The difficulties which beset the Chinese are nothing in comparison with those which beset Germany.'

In Germany at that time, and later, many lost heart, and amongst them the German of to-day counts those who acted half-heartedly for the vital interests of the country, without any acts of opposition, and those who went to Locarno and the League of Nations, where they were never accorded full respect.

From the beginning others saw in the League an instrument for the betrayal of confidence, demeaning international rights at Geneva and The Hague, which was in the end proved to be true by the acknowledgements made in open session at the Houses of Parliament by the leaders of the British nation.

Useful for repression and denials, the League of Nations proved itself too weak to help Germany in her special concerns. So Germany had to leave the League, where she had never been received on honourable terms of complete equality.

He who speaks true peace must know this picture of the League of Nations as Guardian of the false peace, in the minds of the oppressed. Then the Germans will know him.

If a too bitter, dark and acid train of thought appears to prevail in this image, analogy should be brought to the fore, which comes from the age-old distant Byzantium, from a time when Justinian believed that he had checked the waves of wandering peoples. Procopius of Caesarea said in just appreciation of the facts—'Oppression confuses and poisons the judgment of the oppressed

and leads him to madness and desperation.' It would have been no wonder if the most populated country in Central Europe, overcome with madness and desperation, had fallen into that abyss when it stood on the brink and saw the horrifying depths. Only Adolf Hitler and movement pulled the mass of the German people back from this abyss.

From this gigantic work for his people Adolf Hitler got the power over their souls which enabled him in his own person to stretch out the hand of the whole Nation towards true peace. This background of the psychology of the people must be known to each citizen of the encircling and so-called victorious powers if he wishes to know the seriousness, the sustaining force and perhaps also the unique character of these peace offers. They come from a strong and proud soul. Here is the last and deepest thought from the famous dialogue in Schiller's *Tell*. 'Together the weakest are strong.—The Strong is mightiest alone.' There is much else on that page, which it would be useful to the statesman to know. If a strong man is forced to stand alone because his outstretched hand receives no reciprocal shake, but a questionnaire, it is good to be and to remain aware of these words.

It is the unique character of this great opportunity for the ripeness of peace in Central Europe that the British leaders of politics and the Press must come to appreciate.

In Central Europe, long spiritual work and, finally, the spiritual guidance of the Chancellor, was needed to make the disillusioned ready to found a real peace, so that those who had become mistrustful would begin to believe in the possibilities of the other side. Certainly the continuous development of the Chancellor's peace speeches had done much in this matter.

There were few Germans who knew at all the point of view of almost unsurmountable distrust which the French have to overcome when they are working their way to a middle course of give and take. But the comparable German pole of distrust was equally extreme. To-day, we know the life of Marshal Foch exactly, and we have dedicated to him a widely-read German biography. To-day we try to do justice, as far as we can, to his good intentions when he wrote, irritated and angered, from G.H.Q. on January 10th 1919 in his note to the plenipotentiaries of the Allied and Associated Powers—"The Entente, in the name of the principles of Right and Freedom, have had to oppose without being prepared this highly developed system of Powers which was based on centuries of constant organization." It may be that Foch believed what he wrote, as Poincaré may have believed much of what he said. But I have at my hand a book by André Chéradame (*L'Europe et la question d'Autriche au seuil du XX. siècle*, Paris, 1919, with a number of excellent plates)—a study of how to destroy the Habsburg Monarchy with the greatest possible damage to the Germans, which had been taught in the École des Sciences Politiques, in Paris. Is that what is meant by 'not being prepared'? Who would believe it?

No one disputes that it is easier to sow weeds amidst wheat than to sow wheat in a field over-grown with weeds of distrust and to ripen it up to the harvest. Such good fruitful seeds were sown by Adolf Hitler in his foreign political speeches from May and October 1933 onwards—seeds thrown in one straight row as he strode unerringly forward. On July 8th 1934, Rudolf Hess, the front-line fighter who was five times wounded, cried over the heads of the statesmen and the journalists behind the lines to the front-line fighters of all countries—"The front-line

fighters want peace. The peoples want peace. The German Government wants peace.' It was wonderful how Sir Ian Hamilton, one of the noblest War personalities of Britain, honoured in all parts of the earth, and one of the best military psychological observers of the Russo-Japanese war, came forward among the first to grasp the full warmth of heart and the illuminating truth of this young soldier on the other side, and how he answered with gruff heartiness but with obvious sincerity. This echo between the souls of the two great Germanic peoples broke the ice, which, however, was still far from being melted. It gathered up in the form of pack ice, and took the shape first of restraint after seemingly successful visits, and more recently of a questionnaire, tainted with the atmosphere of Geneva. But already the Premier and the Foreign Minister across the Channel had begun to realize that they must at least put to the test what the German Chancellor was offering them. They became more and more convinced of the seriousness which sounded through the campaign for a change in the mentality of Europe and the World, carried on by the Chancellor with increasing will-power in the fight for equal honour, freedom and independence.

Perhaps even the well-wishers amongst foreign listeners were unaware of the international work necessary for the preparation of the German people—the work of educating the people politically. It is to be found in the slowly progressing peace reflections of Hitler's speeches for equality and peace in 1934, in the further progress of 1935 with the great speech in the Reichstag on May 21st, and in the Party Congress of Freedom—which led to the culmination of the greatest will for peace attainable by the German people in the spring and summer of 1936.

It was much more as a necessary consideration of the



political education of the German people than for the leaders abroad who might really have understood this development that the Chancellor unrolled once again in his historical Reichstag speech of March 7th 1936, the desolate picture of the German sorrows since that 'Unhappy Treaty which will one day stand in history as the leading example of human shortsightedness and unreasonable passions, of how a war may *not* be ended unless it is intended to bring further perplexities to the peoples'.

He who wishes to give himself the bitter pleasure of making a list of these perplexities certainly does not need to resort to German sources. He will find quantities of them beyond the German frontier. And little of what was said in Germany about the treaty burden carried by the League of Nations or about the decline of this institution rivals what the Press and statesmen of the League countries said about it themselves, when moved on occasions connected with Manchuria and Abyssinia.

This League idea found a ringing echo in the souls of the German people, and it was for them above all that the Chancellor stated, 'There was a moment when statesmen had the opportunity to introduce the spirit of brotherly understanding among the nations by one appeal to the minds and hearts of millions of ex-soldiers in the belligerent countries. Perhaps that would have brought lasting relief to the world and made possible a collaboration among the nations which would have endured for centuries. At that moment, a generous gesture, which could, however, only have come from the victorious, would have been a miracle of love that could have brought world peace. This did not happen.'

How could one dare now to expect such a gesture from the once vanquished, a gesture which would only serve the vanity of a nation already gilded with glory—a nation

which, nevertheless, at times affects fear of the vanquished, arms to the teeth and fortifies and, as all Central Europe knows since she pressed forward towards the Rhine from the Rhone, the Saone, the Maas and the Somme, allies herself with every one who is damaging Central Europe, be it the nomads of the East, the Norman robbers of the sea, the Turks, the Sarmates, the White or Red Russians.

Only a man with the boundless power over the soul of the German people, such as Hitler has, could dare to pass over all the hymns of hate in former though not unforgotten Sunday speeches by Poincaré and Barthou, to pass over the outpouring of such 'unreasonableness', in order to indicate and secure for his people the great way of the future, the unavoidable road to a peaceful Europe.

In the later peace speeches of the Chancellor, particularly, it is necessary to read, not only those parts where a master-mind has opened the necessary safety-valves for an unbearable over-pressure, but rather the parts which are not exposed so prominently, and where guarding dykes have been erected against the people's passion and elementary force whipped up through centuries by pressure and foreign domination. For it touches the sores of the people's spirit like scorn when it is announced as an accepted fact that one can never expect from France and Belgium what they both demand from Germany, the patient submission to foreign soldiers on the Rhine and on the frontier west of the Rhine. What amount of confidence in the World Peace policy of the Chancellor was necessary to keep quiet during such international discussions, and not to turn down all negotiations which had so little to do with honour and equality of rights! 'It is also part of the wisdom needed

in creating and maintaining a family of nations to use these internal laws externally'—so declared the Chancellor. But where was the echo?

The unlimited personal prestige of the Chancellor and our confidence in him makes it possible for him to ease this tension. But the foreign countries would be very much mistaken if they did not recognize, in the reticent dignity of slowly ripening answer to the questionnaire, an increase of the Chancellor's prestige and the silent, exultant acquiescence of a people once again conscious of their power.

This quiet reserve towards undignified demands has only increased the confidence in the promise 'After the signing of the Peace Treaties in 1919, I took it upon myself to solve this (unsolved German) question. Not because I wish to hurt France or any other state, but because the German people cannot continually bear the pain which has been inflicted on it—the German people shall not bear it and will not bear it!'

We regard this as a natural law of politics, which holds good everywhere, and the consequences of which are as certain as the departure of Japan and Italy from an unbearable pressure of over-population was certain and unavoidable.

Where was there in 1918-19 a man of the comprehension and insight of Lord Kitchener, who two decades earlier had made the Peace of Vereeniging between the English and the Boers? Fourteen years later those Boers defended the Empire which had placed them in concentration camps not so long ago. Where was there a man like the Briton, Bernard Holland, who in his time had used, in his work *Imperium et Libertas* the conjunctive *et* instead of the excluding *aut*? Lloyd George would claim to have predicted all the evil consequences. It is certain

that he did little to avoid them. Marshal Foch did not reach the military greatness of his rival Kitchener in arranging peace, however great was his talent for ironing out wrinkles in the General Staffs of the Coalition. At the end the nerves of the Anglo-Saxons on both sides of the Atlantic seemed to have grown steadier than Gallic nerves—excluding Clemenceau. But their military education had reached its height in Kitchener, who had died too soon. He could have counterbalanced the French, but he was not at Versailles. Here, too, are reasons underlying the loss of peace in Europe.

Not only Germany, but the whole of Central Europe, stand behind the Chancellor in the opinion that the development of Europe out of the miscarried and lost treaties of 1919 must be peaceful, because a forced settlement would destroy the future of this part of the world.

Every German lover of peace considers it fortunate for the otherwise historically painful position of Central Europe and its largest prevailing population, that the comprehension of the necessity for a thorough reform of the League of Nations has come to the notice of British circles and that of many of the other fifty sanctionist powers at the expense of Italy and Ethiopia—as formerly of China and Japan—and not at the expense of Germany.

‘I have boldly made concrete proposals in regard to all those concrete factors which could be suggested as a means of lessening the strained tension existing in Franco-German relations,’ said the Chancellor, summing up in his speech of the 7.3.1936. At one time in Paris one could have had the limitation to an army of 200,000 or 300,000 men, just as England had her Naval Agreement. Instead of this there came the pact with the Soviet, the transformation of Czechoslovakia into a Russian aircraft

carrier, and a corridor for 'Sarmates' in the middle of Europe.

He who pays a certain attention to these developments will realize that the entry of the Red Army into the middle of Europe as a means of pressure reduces the stipulations of the Locarno Treaty to dust. Every true soldier in the Old World, from Tokyo and Vladivostok to the Pyrenees, knows that too. The representatives of the smaller powers, such as the newly founded Peasant Ministry of Sweden, and the Swiss Federal Councillor Motta, who is certainly not pro-German, see it most clearly, with terrifying presentiments. Motta understands a little of the methods of the Komintern, at least from the practical experiences of his colleague, the Mayor of Geneva. 'Soviet Russia is the exponent of a world-revolutionary attitude to life organized as a State. Her conception of the State is an open confession to the methods of world-revolution.' The German Chancellor and the world-experienced Swiss Federal Councillor coincide in such conceptions! If the Heads of the Russian State wished for peace, it would be there to-morrow, in all reality, in China, Spain, Outer Mongolia, and East Turkestan. Instead of this, China, after twenty-five years of civil war, is 'still in the turmoil' bequeathed to her by Lenin. Spain, according to Lenin the country second only to Southern Italy in her suitability for carrying through a Communist revolution, is to-day shaken with her blessings. The French Popular Front, too, have had a preliminary taste of what is coming to them if they do not dance to the music of Moscow.

It would be from there if it happened to suit the Entente of Moscow, Prague and Paris, that the designation of the aggressor would come. Practical experience has taught us quickly—'What kind of effective sanctions

can there possibly be against such an overwhelming combination of spiritual and military unity?' According to a widespread opinion such sanctions would be brought into force only sparingly and with reluctance against the Russian Army, with its peace strength of 1,350,000 or its war strength and reserves of seventeen and a half million men, and against the largest tank force and the largest air force in the world!

'This gigantic mobilization of the East against Central Europe' (which is not for the first time instigated by Western politics) 'is opposed, not only to the letter, but, above all, to the spirit of the Locarno Pact.'

How very true, in connexion with the future creation of a new, peaceful Europe, is this cry from the heart of the German Chancellor for a change in mentality, which has long gained the upper hand over the old-style diplomacy among his war-experienced staff, men who have really shown that neither weakness nor cowardice is the source of their convictions in the desire for a better future for every part of the earth.

What a contrast to this spiritual attitude is the cynical and frivolous harping of mechanical minds on technical power to be found in the Soviet Union. In this case the Soviet Union misuses a favourably situated and therefore violated Slav country as a starting-place for the military aircraft of a people secure in its own country, and thus through hostile acts the Slovaks are to be stamped as the aggressor. They are bravely and desperately opposing this role, assigned to them by Prague, Moscow and, of late, Bucharest, in which they are expected to give their aerodromes as starting-points for the attacks and as targets for the counter-attacks in the final battle of Central Europe. One only has to consult the map—'Europe menacée',—prepared by the Slovak Council at

Geneva. A simple comparison of the red-coloured parts betrays to the untrained eye those who propose to attack and those who, in defence of their dearest possessions, stand in a country which is populated to its fullest capacity.

If preparations to defend these threatened possessions do not serve world peace or future justice more than a cowardly submission to foreign force, or stooping before a threatening people, when every Russian has eighteen times as many possibilities of expanding his possessions as every German, then the right of self-preservation and the right of self-respect, even on the point of destruction, are unlawful.

Even Gandhi, the preacher of defencelessness, will not have this cowardice for the Indians.

'The German nation is in any case not willing to be treated for all times as a second-class people, with lesser rights. Her love for peace is perhaps greater than that of any other nation, because she has suffered most from the wretchedness of the war.' We have surrendered old German land in Alsace-Lorraine, about whose unlawful robbery by France a great Briton, Carlyle, tried to arouse the sympathies of his compatriots. We have given France a guarantee of her frontiers and we have concluded a non-aggression pact with Poland. But in spite of all treaties, we cannot stand and watch our countrymen outside the eastern frontiers of Germany being famished or beaten to death, in Memel and Czechoslovakia. No less a person than Seton Watson, the great Slavophile, once declared to one of the cleverest Czech writers that it was a political necessity to avoid this slaughter. Shall we be less germanophile than Seton Watson or Edward Benesch in his latest speeches?

The German love of peace has certainly been heavily taxed. We bore it silently when our brothers beyond the

frontiers were treated badly and unjustly, and the only answer to complaints was: 'They are only Germans!'

One-third of the German people, which is scattered around the mangled frontiers of the Reich, and delivered to the domination of uncultured foreigners, experiences this retort every day.

In spite of that the German people has answered willingly to the Chancellor's call to make further sacrifices, more willingly since 1935 and 1936, because it does not have to answer unarmed and dishonoured, but can do it of its own free will, with honour and equality, like a valiant man ready for peace. But one should not overestimate such willingness in front of a continuous refusal to understand. Even the best goodwill has its margin of resistance.

We know that 'He who ever lights the torches of war in Europe can only want chaos and destruction. We hope with conviction, not for the decline, but for the rebirth of Europe, and we will do our best to attain this end.' This was the gist of the German Chancellor, as he called the peaceful aims of his people 'his proud hope and unshakable belief'. In this belief we follow him.



STRENGTH for peace is impossible without strength  
for war.

SIR EDWARD GRIGG:

*Speech at the Annual Meeting of the Navy League  
on Wednesday, May 13th, 1936*

## CHAPTER VI BE PREPARED

### SIR EDWARD GRIGG'S WARNING

*Moderation and the 'Observer'—Crisis, Here and Now—Mr Winston Churchill and Re-armament—A Memory of 1914—Realism—League's Moral Weakness—Sanctions and Article XIX—The Test of Encirclement—Evasion, Fulfilment and Rathenau—Regional Pacts—Unsettled Opinion—Ultimatum.*

IT was immediately after Question Time when I had my hurried talk with Sir Edward Grigg in a lobby of the House of Commons, and as it always appears to the uninitiated there was the usual atmosphere of something important just about to begin, of scurry and of destinations unknown.

Although there was a slight lull in the situation—the ebb before Hitler's Rhineland tidal wave—Sir Edward was in a realist mood, resolute in face of his urgent duties which will be, no doubt, to swell the heavy majority passing the vast re-armament plan and to make appropriate comments before doing so. He reflects very clearly the temper of that majority. He has always been a moderate, speaking regularly and discreetly for the League of Nations Union.

When Mr. J. L. Garvin delivered himself of a series of pro-Italian panic articles and generally tore passion to tatters, going even beyond the limits of his own accepted over-statements, many felt that a grievance is not met by brandishing an opposing grievance. Conservative opinion was haughtily offended. It was left to Sir Edward to modify the argument and to suggest statesman's caution rather than journalist's heresy. In two masterly articles on the themes of moral cleavage in Europe and the Folly

of Extremes, he succeeded in bridging the gulf between the editor and his readers.

'I have seen something myself,' he wrote, 'of the effects of Amharic rule, and I say with deep conviction that the League will be false to the principles enunciated in Article XXII of the Covenant if that system is not brought under effective European control.' He drew attention to the Puritan in our composition, our almost sentimental self-righteousness. He found the Achilles heel of Sanctions—and presumably of all national foreign policy ending in war—'Governments pass, people endure and neither Peace nor international goodwill is strengthened by visiting upon peoples the sins of their rulers.'

Though his Conservatism is conciliatory, it is the reverse of anaemic.

'Do you think there will be a war in five years' time?' I asked. 'The crisis is here and now', he replied, 'we shall be lucky if we get through 1936, and if we do 1937 will be worse. There are many differences, of course, but it is 1913 over again. It was Mr. Churchill, last December, who brought it home to us again with the figures he gave of German re-armament. I didn't believe they could be accurate, so went and consulted some of my banking friends in a position to know. They said that the figures of German expenditure were unquestionably formidable; although no precise statement could be made.'

So it is Mr. Churchill again. I had been doing some biographical work which meant turning over old newspapers, an eery task, and there it all was. Churchill and the Lords of the Admiralty fighting for those extra dreadnoughts that would find us strong and prepared if the need pounced on us suddenly. That particular Cabinet crisis had been too intense and personal to hold out against the usual *ballons d'essai*, but it must have been something of a

jolt to those, for instance, who took the *Daily Mail* as the milk of the word. For a little third leader on January 1st, 1914, had put forward the following Happy New Year. 'Sir Edward Grey has turned our palpably detached and disinterested position in South-Eastern Europe to the fullest use, and in doing so he has appreciably improved our relations with Germany, without in any way impairing the Ententes with France and Russia that are and must be the basis of our Continental policy. The past year, indeed, may always be memorable for having brought Great Britain and Germany into active co-operation and understanding after a long period of estrangement. We enter 1914, in short, on excellent terms with all the leading Powers.'

So it is 1913 again. And only a few yards away with all his technique of threats and promises the same great Parliamentary virtuoso and military salvationist once more dominates the scene—'and do you think', Sir Edward continued, 'that a man like Sir Austen Chamberlain would make a speech in frank criticism of his old colleague the Prime Minister, unless he thought the country was in danger? It is not a question of the amount of the 300 millions the White Paper wants, it is whether we can get the work done in time.' He asked when I expected to have these essays ready. 'Sometime during the autumn,' I said. 'Well, if you are going to do useful work, avoid theories and unrealities and put down the facts as they are.'

Has Sir Edward abandoned the League to which he has given such active support all over the country? Is the moderate Conservative M.P. paying lip-service to the ideal of an international system while giving his votes and the weight of his Parliamentary influence to the traditional Might and Right policy? No, Sir Edward finds a fundamental moral weakness in the League. 'It has confused

the guarantee of Peace with the guarantee of the *status quo*. Perhaps I may draw a historical parallel. The Reformation contained within itself certain ideals and certain defects which led to the counter-Reformation. The League has similarly provoked a counter-League. It will never make its principles prevail so long as it embodies a universal and unconditional guarantee of the *status quo*.

I asked whether Article XIX might not be developed. There was originally some plan, he thought, to incorporate it in Article X, but now it was nothing other than a *Liberum Veto*. France required the Unanimity clauses so as to have the final control over matters touching her own security, and this made revision for all practical purposes unworkable. 'It is fatal for the League to undertake forceful measures. It is quite obvious that it has done and can do nothing in the Italo-Abyssinian War apart from the action of the British Fleet in the Mediterranean. It is misleading to claim that the burden of Sanctions can be borne equally. No. The basis of the League's authority has got to be one of compromise.'

I asked whether in fact the League's weakness was not rather that it has simply become one of France's instruments in her policy of isolating Germany. He did not agree at all. Franco-German relations admittedly raised the problem of encirclement, 'but the only test of encirclement was when no way was left open for a particular Power to enter into an agreement made between other Powers'. In his opinion—and it is significant that it has not been influenced by all the subsequent tension and paralysis—the Franco-Soviet Pact did not constitute a violation of Locarno, and the remedies provided in Locarno remain open to Germany.

American policy, he felt, was the turning-point. As soon as America went for the policy of Evasion the League

was undermined. 'I was at Cannes and it was there that I heard Rathenau stand out for the policy of Fulfilment. Rathenau was soon afterwards assassinated by his own countrymen. Too often we forget recent history.'

In answer to another question of mine, he strongly favoured the limitation of our international ideas and ambitions to Europe, to strive for the whole world was to put too great a strain on a delicate and experimental organization; but there was real security in the system of Regional Pacts.

The ultimate cause of the whole war menace to-day was the unsettled state of public opinions the world over. The result was the failure of the various governments to interpret them properly. The need to satisfy them remained, and this was leading the governments into all their aggressive acts.

I once had the privilege of acting as Chairman for Sir Edward Grigg when he made a speech at Oxford on 'The situation in Germany'. That was in the spring of 1934, after Germany had left the League and a few weeks before the Putsch of June 30th. Then he was calm, reflective and particularly detached. It is impossible to over-emphasize the change in his attitude. He implies to-day that the engine of war is gathering speed, that the brakes of security are not working, and that the bridge of human goodwill, already undermined, may well collapse under the strain.

This interview may be taken as an ultimatum.

Westminster's prevailing weather report is of gales to lash our shores. Be prepared! War is with us again: The thunder clouds are gathering and the lamps are going out in Europe.

THE conception that a modern State or Government, which is treated normally as defender and police, can suddenly and, as it were, in a psychological or moral lapse, become an aggressor or a criminal, is primitive social mythology. It is comparable to the theological idea of a 'guilty race'. Modern war is not made in a day or a week or a year. And again, the criminal in fact is disobeying a law to which he is presumed to have given consent. But no nation is disobeying a law to which it has consented, if it is, in its own eyes, defending its rights. Historically, the whole policy and theory of aggression and of criminal nations are due to the propaganda used on both sides between 1914 and 1918. In short, there is no escape from the absurdity of the conception of defence against defence by extending the area from which any supposedly virtuous nation can seek its defence. So long as any defence against other governments is conceived to be necessary for any State, so long are there 'possible enemies'. And the mere suspicion that some Governments are 'possible enemies' poisons the whole of international intercourse and hinders the modernization of the State-system. The members of the League of Nations cannot possibly regard one another as potentially aggressive criminals, while they co-operate in common services for public health or commerce. The situation is ridiculous.

C. DELISLE BURNS:

*Modern Theories and Forms of International Organisation*  
(In the *Outline of Modern Knowledge*)

## CHAPTER VII

### SIDELIGHTS ON SECURITY

*I. Lord Beaverbrook's Boys—Fashions in realism—Alien worshippers.*

*II. Post-war Security—American neutrality—Stay Out At Any Price—The Eastern Fringe—Mr. Hoover quoted: his characteristics—Cultural relations.*

*III. Russia—The Great Deception—Historical summary—Imperial and Bolshevik counterfeit—Changes and Chances—The Osoaviachum—French initiative.*

*IV. French Dilemma—Spartan Model—Pacifism and La Gloire—Historical analogies—French Imperialism—Reciprocity—The limitations of Locarno—France in Eastern Europe—The problem of Austria, Hungary and the status quo—Czechoslovakia—The tragedy of French security.*

*V. The League and false hopes—Circumscribed power—The League habit—Time-lag—The Papacy—The Destiny of the League.*

#### I

VERY shortly after my talk with Sir Edward Grigg, I was listening to a conversation between a young German and a couple of well-informed *Daily Express* journalists—or, with apologies to Lord Northcliffe's Young Men and Mr. Cochran's Young Ladies—Lord Beaverbrook's Boys. For theirs may, perhaps, best be summarized as a second-year Balliol technique; of being infinitely weary but lighting up under the stimulus of amused contempt. They have already tasted experience to the dregs and that helps them under mild protest to carry on the loathsome but indispensable task of misleading humanity with printed matter and a daily net sale of over two million.

'Do you think that the Press is free anywhere?' they asked as a kind of catch. 'Certainly not in England,' my German friend mused, failing to fall into it—pause—



'There will be a war, of course,' they were good enough to tell him, and from their manner he quite justifiably thought they were implying German aggression. That is not what they meant, however. They were not presuming to find an aggressor or even an ally. They were merely pointing out that a War was a Date.

The effect of these talks, the realism of Parliament and the realism of Fleet Street, plus a visit to the Royal Commission in process of sitting on the Private Manufacture of Armaments, where Captain Ball of Fairey Aviation showed me the realism of industrial enterprise, have reinforced my faith in Fantasy. Put down the facts as they are. There never will be time. Not enough is known about them. Not enough people are interested in them. It is subtly worse than that: a description of contemporary power politics, as Gerald Heard has pointed out, is not so much a tale of slow development as a series of instantaneous shots providing no clues of sequence.

There are fashions in political realism, as in most symbolic values, frail and changeable as a summer frock. We who first began to wonder about politics during the excitement of the General Strike have grown up among certain institutions which we accept as an integral part of the cosmos. One of them is the League of Nations, and another, Wireless. Both, at the moment, are, unfortunately, at the disposal of government interests, but in one respect the national game is already up. The various News Bulletins have riddled the degraded realism of the cheap Press. The embryonic yet persistent League has modified the whole technique of diplomacy towards the peoples and away from the diplomatists.

We are often warned against associating the ideas conjured up by the word Covenant with the halting formulae, the face-saving arrangements, given that name

in 1919, yet however small the beginning, the renaissance of Geneva we regard as genuine. It is a response, however feeble, to a fundamental need in us. Geneva means to us to-day, not the harsh injunctions of Calvin's theocracy or the senile atheism of Voltaire—but world legislature and world executive in embryo. Accordingly, we tend to regard Mr. Churchill as the sentimentalist and the language he uses in the beginning of his 'World Crisis' the sound of Babel. We do not need warnings and picturesque similes—the remorseless tramping of armies or the gathering of the crowds before Armageddon—we accept the organization of peace as involving dull, hard work. Those who encourage national re-armament and scheme security are the idealogues, the dreamers of strange dreams.

During the last year or so, however, the cult of the League has been subjected to scandal, and seems to have been defiled by alien worshippers; to have been, to all intents and purposes, thrice denied, yet all the while to have been gaining in political substance and prestige. It is this sinister paradox in international affairs that is our primary concern, and it is worth while considering briefly some of the cross-currents, the causes of our hopes and fears, and whether they are justified.

## II

A great deal of necessary scorn has been thrown at the world's post-War drive for political security. Economic madness and social unrest make a bad background for stable political relationships, but political policy has not wholly reflected the one or the other.

We can take great encouragement from the League's continued existence after it had been abandoned by a

minority in the U.S. Senate. Indeed, it is feasible to claim that it has strengthened the League quickly to be rid of its dependence upon effete constitutional procedure the other side of the Atlantic. American co-operation is a positive hindrance until the American people are represented by majority votes and their government no longer a commentary on the tactical skill of aggressive and reactionary cliques. Not that American neutrality is insensitive to the European dilemma, the growth of the Stay-Out-At-Any-Price school is at least a tribute to the alarming fact that the price of staying out has gone up since 1914, and the corollary of this movement's success may be to waken Europe to the potency of Middle West opinion. Most Englishmen, for instance, come away well content with a short visit to the Anglophile Eastern fringe of the States. They will have detected concern for Europe, awareness of her problems. Philadelphia and Pittsburg house those who are the champions not only of co-operation, but also of active intervention. Nevertheless, their views remain the exception; the party that represents them, a political potential. The visitors return without beginning to prove the rule. Still, there is a political potential, and it is well to realize that it derives its nourishment and its *raison d'être* from what European Governments do or fail to do.

The disaster of the Hoare-Laval plan is not so much the effect it might have had on Abyssinia as that which it, in fact, had on the American interventionists.

I was anxious to have first-hand the views of two famous Americans on the neutrality problem.<sup>1</sup> This did not

<sup>1</sup> I wrote to Mr. Hoover asking him in particular about debts, to find out whether the Coolidge view—"They hired the money, didn't they?"—was still holding sway about disarmament and collective security and about the union of the democratic powers.

He was good enough to read through the letter carefully, but I

præ possible; but it is well worth while pausing to consider the temper underlying the neutrality argument, and the *Challenge to Liberty* shows how wide a gap there is in language and idiom between American and English politics. Mr. Hoover may be anathema to some of the New Dealers, but is one of the most travelled and widely experienced American statesmen, his activities ranging from metallurgical research in Italy to Polish Relief. His references to the European onslaught on individualism are somewhat cursory and unsympathetic. 'We may briefly examine the other social philosophies which are to-day offered as a challenge to our American System.'<sup>1</sup> Socialism is dismissed. 'True American Liberalism utterly denies the whole creed of Socialism. The disguised or open objective of Socialism is equality in income, wages or economic rewards. The tenet of equality in true Liberalism is a tenet of equality in birth, equality before the law and equality of opportunity as distinguished from equality of reward for services.'<sup>2</sup>

Five-year plans and the like are brusquely cast aside. American Liberty 'holds that ample leadership and improvement cannot be found except by competition, that

understand remarked that he did not wish to embarrass the present administration by a criticism of its foreign policy. He very kindly sent me a copy of his latest book, the *Challenge to Liberty*, with permission to quote from any of his speeches and writings.

To Mr. Hearst I wrote also, beginning with Senator Schall's recorded claim that 'Europe is hell' and pleading that we at least would be feeling the heat of the flames first. I asked whether the objective of the Hearst Newspapers was an international order or America—and fifty-seven different varieties of Nations—First. I noted his telegram of February 1917, which had bluntly asked, 'What good are the IOUs of a bankrupt?', in the hope of finding out whether he had anything more to say than 'I told you so'.

I am informed that my letter got as far as Mr. B. B. Meeck, which in the Hearst feudal system is a long way, but after that was presumably lost in one of the baron's hot and cold water castles.

<sup>1</sup> *The Challenge to Liberty* (Scribner's), p. 49.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 57.

it cannot be found under the bushel of governmental bureaucracy'.<sup>1</sup> Communism 'is merely the imposition of Socialism all at once by violence, and Bolshevism is the insistence that the Proletariat shall administer such imposition.'<sup>2</sup> He quotes partial definitions of Communism from Bukharin, Engels, and the small Soviet Encyclopaedia.

He asserts: 'With seventeen years of record in Russia we are no longer dependent upon combating a theory of Utopia. We can see it in practice. . . . Freedom of men's minds and souls is more precious to the future of humanity than even the jam on their bread—which neither Socialism or Communism will produce.' He claims that the general standard of living in Russia, a country which is larger and has more varied natural resources than the States is 'much lower than that of our people, who are to-day on relief'.<sup>3</sup>

'What we are interested in is whether Fascism is better for us. . . . Americans unfamiliar with Italy do not know how safe a thing Liberty is both for soul and body.'<sup>4</sup>

'It may be emphasized again that all these systems of society—Socialism, Communism, Fascism, and Nazi-ism—have some features in common. All these various forms of the collectivist philosophy merely differ in degree and kinds of servitudes.'<sup>5</sup>

His message is simply that America has the secret of good government, she has no need to go abroad to find it, she has only to be true to her own traditions. Although Mr. Hoover's party is undermined by faction and his presidential prospects are meagre, his ideas and language are authentic America, from New York to Denver, from San Francisco to the remote rice acres of the Tennessee

<sup>1</sup> *The Challenge to Liberty*, p. 58

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 61.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 62-5.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 72, 73.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 74.

valley. The Alleghenys is not a dividing line for those who think that the ideal pattern of the social order is ultimately 'stout, honest homespun'. Nevertheless, the ideal during the testing years of Mr. Hoover's Presidency fell a few points with the slump. In 1923 during the millennium he stressed that 'there is a world of difference between the principles and spirit of old-world individualism and that which we have developed in our country. We have a Government, a special social system of our own, we made it ourselves from materials brought from conditions in Europe; we have lived it, we constantly improve it, we have seldom tried to define it.'<sup>1</sup>

By 1934 the theme has been chastened by crisis, has become more mature and comprehensive, has mellowed in tone. 'The issue of civilization to-day is whether Liberty can survive the wounds it has received in these recent years. The fate of Liberalism rests to-day mainly upon three great nations: America, the British Commonwealth, and France. It is within these areas where the fortresses of freedom, though much weakened, can be held.'<sup>2</sup> However much, then, Mr. Hoover may be regarded as a reactionary and a business man in this age of New Deals, slogans and initials, the simultaneous consistency and development of his opinion is symptomatic. His conception of Peace all through has been that, even if it is primarily indigenous, at least there are shareholders abroad. But American citizens who tend to confuse the two meanings of security, and believe that where they invest for personal profit all is well for every one, recognize in the British rejection of his Disarmament scheme and French delay after his Moratorium but two examples from a list of sustained European ingratitude.

<sup>1</sup> See his *American Individualism*.

<sup>2</sup> *The Challenge to Liberty*, pp. 189, 190.

Nevertheless, we probably assume too much if we argue that America will not intervene merely out of disappointment or pique, or because of a dominant minority. It goes deeper than that. As long ago as December 7th 1932, in a speech at Salt Lake City, Mr. Hoover had laid down the bald principle of America's widespread aversion to sanctions. 'I have made but one reservation,' he said, 'and that is we will join no movement that proposes to use military or economic force in its attempts to prevent War. For that is a contradiction of method.' If that kind of opinion is held in high places, it will take something more than plain arguments to shift it. The arguments will need to be reinforced by more inspired examples of police duty than Japanese control of opium in Manchukuo and Italian monopoly of mustard gas in Abyssinia. The entry of America into the League at the present time, even if it were conceivable, would probably be premature, the addition of a disintegrating element. We waste away if we wish for it.

We have immediate tasks. We have to foster more widespread cultural interchange. The indifference of the Heart of England towards the Heart of America is the first barrier to that spread of confidence our statesmen so feverishly believe in; but to link up Wiltshire and the Middle West is apparently beyond their terms of reference.

The development of Anglo-American relations by experiments outside diplomatic technique is probably the most potent inoculation against the disease of nationalism that we have at our immediate disposal. There is the essential basis of common language. The differences in characteristics are sufficiently staggering to attract popular attention, the systematized question and answer is good enough feature journalism to sell a paper and is

already enhancing our wireless programmes. We can begin by taking goodwill for granted. There is no *prima facie* need to call America any longer an ally—an abstraction which in the national jargon is never far removed from envy, is most often a response to hatred, usually feeds on malice and ends in all uncharitableness.

One of the great steps in the right direction, but, as far as publicity is concerned, made in the dark, was America's full acceptance of the obligation of membership in the International Labour Organization. This, Professor Zimmern regarded at the time as more important than Russia's simultaneous entry into the League. Events justified him. Indeed, if the League has been strengthened by America's abstention, it can in similar terms be said to have been weakened by Russia's admission.

### III

The development of Russia into what is commonly called a first-class Power, political and economic, has probably been the most potent corrosive influence in the modern world. It is Russian policy above all others during the last 200 years that has turned fears into dupes and hopes into liars.

The Great Deception began at Kunersdorf and has gone on ever since. There are a variety of causes. The barbaric tyranny of the Tsars, the most fickle and the most enduring of autocratic régimes; in our times a government of matriarchies and demon lovers, madmen and mystics. All the Russias is a summary of the problem; too many facets and no stability. Potemkin's splendour was not Potemkin's power. Then there was the influence of the Jesuits expelled from France, who were as rats scampering from a sinking ship. Theirs was



the most advanced diplomatic technique of the age. There was Russia's glorious role during the First Empire; on a barge in the middle of the Niemen the world was talked into two. Constantinople was to be the Tsar's share. At Erfurt grandiose designs were further discussed, but with Talleyrand, and for a time when Napoleon should be disposed of. Moscow contributed to the legend: only the terrible retreat was remembered; not the original plan of a campaign that, with reasonable skill and initiative on the part of Jerome, might have ended in a complete triumph before even one-fifth of that Grand Army had approached anywhere near the Pripet Marshes. Then came the Holy Alliance rejected by Castlereagh as 'a loud-sounding nothing' and significantly enough by the Pope as well, but lapped up by all the other sovereigns. It was a pious fraud, yet it gave moral grandeur to the new Alexander. So by the time the nineteenth century had advanced diplomacy attributed to Russia a wholly spurious authority. The Crimean crisis, for instance, was intensified by a nameless but mistaken dread. *Punch* cartoons reflect the idea of a Colossus, of a great Russian bear trampling upon India. The thought of Afghanistan sent a shudder through all good Imperialists, and so on into the fantastic machinations of the twentieth century—Fashoda, Agadir—the weight of Russia in the scales of the Balance of Power was at a false figure. Then 1917—Brest-Litovsk. But it meant no inauguration of sanity towards Russia; the counterfeit lingers on.

In our approach to Bolshevism we have alternated between dread, loathing, contempt, inquisitiveness and prostration. We have tended to shun correctives. We have for the most part forgotten sequence and historical contexts. The spasmodic accounts have raised instinctive

reactions, the lust for complete equality, the rhythmic urge of machines and the ritual desire for that which is both absolute and popular. *Bourgeois* intellectuals, real and artificial, have done the cause of peace no particular good by their optimistic attitude to Russia, and the cult of Marxist economics, with Russia as spiritual home, may well prove more sanguinary than our father's political infatuations.

The ideal of planned economy, as Professor MacIver has pointed out, 'is not the feudal manor, nor its logical successor, the Marxist State. These systems do not admit the complex play of economic forces out of which Western industrial civilization has developed. They establish a kind of economic asceticism. Asceticism controls the evils of the flesh by denying the flesh. So these systems control the evils of competition and acquisitiveness by abolishing competition and acquisitiveness. They perform a major surgical operation on the economic body.'<sup>1</sup> The Bolshevik and the League conceptions of a reign of law are fundamentally opposed, and the triumph of the one is likely to be the overthrow of the other. For Bolshevism is a far more insinuating and pervasive form of oligarchy than the makeshift capitalist despotisms. It has comprehensive codes of relationship with other national groups. It has put forward an extremely technical definition of aggression which leaves 'no probable, possible shadow of doubt' in any instance, though there is apparently a loop-hole found for Russia's quite justifiable penetration into Mongolia. There is Kautsky's laborious Supra-Nationalism, a brand of medieval Roman Catholic apologia; and there is Marx himself. It is a major irony of history that *Das Kapital*

<sup>1</sup> *Problems of Peace*, Ninth Series, p. 223: 'National Economic Planning and International Organization.'

should have become a Third Isaiah. If Dostoïevsky's characters are real, only Russians could have done it.

The Bolshevik regime, however, has some reason to regard the League Powers with suspicion and to bargain on a basis of cautious self-interest. In 1922, for instance, Russia was justified in taking up a negative attitude towards Japanese attacks on Manchukuo. To have opposed that aggression in the international interest would have incurred the direct force of Japanese hatred. Would the League Powers have given the assistance to the Bolsheviks they have failed to give to the Nanking Government? Every armament proposal put forward by them has been scouted by the Great Powers. No doubt, then, they are justified when they recall Disarmament or Denikin, Mr. Kellogg or the Chinese Eastern Railway, but still the exploitation of the League from within it is a deplorable remedy. For there is no more compelling commentary on the fatuity of diplomatic purpose than the decline in Russo-German relations and the measures taken to counteract it. The Bolsheviks began their career as the champions of the war victims. The alignment was Russia and Germany to oppose the designs of Poland and France. In May 1933 Herr Hitler renewed the 1926 Berlin Treaty and the 1929 Conciliation Convention.

The Russian régime is the most pretentious of all the new orders, and that is the reason why its example in international affairs is peculiarly disappointing. It is only Machiavelli writ large; no new idealism transformed into living principles; no unilateral disarmament. The Bolsheviks are not bound by the chains of a long diplomatic tradition. They confused good Christians and broke Bishop Gore's heart when, as a gesture of emancipation, and in order to declare to the whole world the break with past perfidy, they published all the pre-War

secret arrangements of the Tsar, but the old beggar-my-neighbour anarchy has triumphed again. All that remains now is the determination of self-defence and the growing resources ~~to~~ make it more ruthlessly efficient than that of other nations.

The military men have to be given the customary honours. Voroshiloff is probably as much an embarrassment to Stalin as Badoglio to Mussolini. The Osoaviachim is training millions to accept the war system, not simply as a necessary evil, but as a glorious objective to one increasing social purpose. As for the Red Army, Mr. C. M. Lloyd does well in calling its system of education 'unique', for, according to him 'the young soldier (or rather "Red Army man", for soldier is a *bourgeois* and "imperialist" term which is not used of the Soviet citizen) is taught during his two years with the colours not merely to shoot and drill and march. He is put through a serious course of culture, with special emphasis on politics and economics. Classes, clubs, lectures, theatres and cinemas, libraries, journals, all play a prominent part in his training, the aim of which is to turn him out an educated citizen, a sound Marxist, and a more devoted fighter. Patriotism is not enough, discipline is not enough; an "ideology" is wanted. Let the warrior understand and believe in—fanatically believe in—the greatness of his cause, and his strength in the battle will be as the strength of ten men.'<sup>1</sup> The deliberate inbreeding of homicidal and quasi-religious manias may help to prove that hell is red, but as far as peace and social regeneration are involved, it is both perversion and bastardy.

For a variety of reasons the Soviet Oligarchs want

<sup>1</sup> *The Intelligent Man's Way to Prevent War*, pp. 197-8. 'The Problem of Russia.'

Peace now; as Bakunin and Bessarabia were to show, Trotsky's imperialism and penetration were premature. But the Russians, with no positive initiative to give the League, however much their motives of expediency may happen to coincide with those of France, tend to be caught up in the French system both to reinforce and ultimately to reflect it.

## IV

M. Litvinoff's facility is not enough. We have got to face the fact that the dilemma of Europe and of the League centres round the dilemma of France.<sup>1</sup> We have further to distinguish French opinion from the French Government.

Their Government is somewhat Spartan in principle. The unpardonable sin is to be found out, but in practice secrets tend to be sold rather than kept. It challenges comparison with the Directory, for it is overwhelmingly a Government of army contractors without any intrinsic glamour. Accordingly, at any given moment ripe for destruction at the hands of an enterprising military despot.

French opinion is, it seems, a sentiment at once tinged with Pacifism and susceptible to La Gloire, rather on the analogy of running simultaneously a good wife and an attractive mistress. We misinterpret the French by calling them democratic. The remarkable strategical and tactical flair of Parisians for street rioting, the *droit administratif*, the constitutional safeguards. These are

<sup>1</sup> See Pertinax's article in *Daily Telegraph* on March 2, 1936, 'France's Influence in Modern Europe', where he refers to 'the ineluctable sequence of events' causing the Franco-Soviet Pact. It is an admirable summary of French pessimism—expecting the worst and getting it. 'Which is the prior danger—the German or the Russian? That is the crucial question. I personally believe and, as a body, French diplomatists believe, that the German peril comes first.'

not the symbols of reliable democratic instinct, but the admission of their weakness.

During August 1914, Mr. Bonar Law, as leader of H.M. Opposition, both in the House and at the Albert Hall defined the Kaiser's Germany as 'Napoleonism without a Napoleon'. The Earl of Birkenhead was, I believe, in the first place responsible for this subtly inaccurate slogan, for Napoleonism is wholly French. It has no equivalent. French Imperialism is as mature and distinctive as the British Raj; and the All-Highest, the Third Reich, are of a different family tree from that of the First Empire. The French Imperialism is primarily Latin European and is based upon the ideal of divide and rule. It does not sledge-hammer sovereignty so much as pension it off. It is conservative and paternal. It is to be found in Sully's Grand Design, in Richelieu and Mazarin, in Louis XIV and in the Napoleons. It is latent in the post-War Republic. Like the classical Roman system and in direct descent from it (indeed its relationship is even closer than the new Fascist Empire can claim, the physical growth of which is stunted and deformed), it is the idealism of expansion rather than of development—the League of Nations must either give effect to the swelling national logic of France or be destroyed.

Although the League means much more for good or for ill to a French than to any other Government, the tendency so far has been to alternate betrayal with protestations of affection; for both Locarno and the Stresa front are fundamentally an alternative security to that which the Covenant was designed to provide. Locarno soon proved to be a highly unsatisfactory compromise both for France and the League, as President Harding's advisers were quick to realize. In their view, the fact that

special guarantees of the Rhineland frontier were exchanged at Locarno instead of Germany being admitted to the League with a security based entirely on the Covenant, together with the scramble for Council seats in 1926, suggested that the old balance of power system 'was being combined' within the League itself and seemed to belie 'the professions of goodwill contained in the Covenant'.<sup>1</sup> For the French Locarno was unsatisfactory, and has continued to be, because of the saving clause. Great Britain at the Assembly was in the unctuous and ambiguous position of recommending the principles of Locarno 'as amongst the fundamental rules which should govern the foreign policy of every Nation', while remaining free of those rules and merely guaranteeing that others kept them. The engagement was not automatic and fully reciprocal and the 'reciprocity of services that can be rendered', says Dennerly, summarizing the French thesis, 'is a guarantee of the solidarity of Treaties'.

In addition to theory there were practical gaps. Locarno gave no assurance for France in Eastern Europe.

There is, for instance, the supreme test case of Austria. The name itself is a fatality for France—the Diplomatic Revolution, Marie Antoinette and Marie Louise. Napoleon might have gone further than abolish the already moribund Empire. He could have removed the traditional Austria from the face of the European map; in doing so he would probably have saved his own dynasty. The failure to exterminate the Habsburg Monarchy in 1806 incurred a political and social cost we are paying off to-day, and challenges immediate comparison with the settlement of 1919. It is now a commonplace that the dissolution of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy had been effected some time before the Treaties officially ratified it.

<sup>1</sup> Citation of Beales' *History of Peace*, p. 320.

What is not so often realized is that the small fragments of Austria and Hungary that survived have now made the maintenance of the *status quo* a basis of French policy. Admittedly to allow the Hungarian Government's revisionist plea would be to sacrifice one of the few spontaneous democratic and progressive experiments in Central Europe.

The present Hungarian régime is a wholly bogus parliamentary system—the arguments of Dr. Jehlicska in the *Daily Mail*, wholly presumptuous. Kanya's and Gömbös' careers are sinister commentaries. To add to Hungary would be to swell one of the most brutal and barbaric governments in Europe. The story of Horthy's Awakening Magyars is about as near as we can get to Attila. As von Papen tactfully put it: 'We in Germany, much later than you in Hungary, have taken to creating our authoritative system.'

Bethlen's view is that the collapse of Austria would not only make German influence dominate in Hungary, but would undermine the French alliance with the Little Entente, and further than that Yugoslavia by force of circumstances would tend to look to Germany in her designs against Italy; Czechoslovakia would be paralysed and Roumania isolated, and both susceptible to *force majeure*. So much, then, may hang on the maintenance of Austria.

~~We are~~ justified in weighing our political support for Governments on their respective merits, their treatment of minorities and land development, their cultural pretensions. In such terms the protection of Czechoslovakia or the Ruthenian Question became our primary concerns in the maintenance of Central European security. 'Ruthenia is to the Little Entente what Austria is to France, England and Italy.'<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> J. D. E. Evans, *That Blue Danube*, p. 244.



But if the League system as against the French system were operative, the defence of Czechoslovakia would not have any particular relation to a policy allowing a plebiscite in Austria, the result of which might make Austria join the Reich, while incidentally doubling Germany's Catholic population and economic liabilities.

The French version of security, if it is the most complex and tenacious, is also the most short-sighted and short-term. It, more than any other, codifies what is the golden wish of all enterprising newspaper proprietors, the permanent state of tension before war.

Yet both for France and the League the feudal survivals hamper and distort realist policies; for if France champions the *status quo* she also desires to relegate the diplomatic significance of frontiers, even though her ideal begins perhaps with the Great Wall and, when the maximum of confidence has been engendered, ends with the Maginot Line. It must be admitted, however, that France had disarmed sufficiently for it to be called something more than a gesture, and what goes beyond all documents or definitions, French inhabitants have had first-hand experience in our lifetime that the blonde beast can be more than neurotic philosophy or the language of military text-books. It has meant blood and rape.

## v

Those who keep on stressing that the League is a new factor in the history of human government tend to raise false hopes. It is no use hiding from our generation the doubtful parentage and the prolonged birth-pangs. It is no use, also, denying that as long as national sovereignty is what it is at the moment—a psychologically, politically, morally and economically dominating influence in social

relations—so long will the League be derivative, a body whose commands are in fact recommendations, whose authority is secondary and circumscribed. Yet in the very modesty of its origins lies its real resource. By 1936 the League has become a habit; it can be accepted and denied; it cannot be ignored. It is slowly and fitfully grappling with the problem of secret discussion. There will be no repetition of July 1914. The days of Isvolsky and Berchtold are a sordid memory. It has by now proved itself to be an effective safety-valve, an indispensable instrument of delay.

The League has perhaps its greatest precedent in the history of the Papacy; for the Papacy through the bitter experience of centuries learnt that it could always afford to wait longer than the other party to the dispute. The basis of conciliation is time-lag. Admittedly, the League has never been allowed by its national components to commit a folly and force an issue of major national concern; that is all to the good. It has had to delve into the technique of compromise.

What many of us, however, who have grown up with it are not prepared to accept is that this subservience should be its final destiny. It is not enough that Geneva should always be Europe's Minute Book. The League has claims on Nationalism as the Papacy had on the Empire. ~~We can~~ get beyond Sir Edward Grigg's realism, be realist ourselves, without invoking the homage of Canossa or the humiliation of Anagni.

## PART II

### DIALECTS OF THE INDIVIDUAL

THE experience of others has no meaning for us except so far as it becomes our own, and the existence of others is no existence for us if it is not in our world that they live. If we know that other men are, we know it by an inferential judgment, and it is by a similar judgment that the matter of their testimony becomes ours. Both they and it can be nothing to us but parts of our experience, are made parts of it by our own inference, and have no validity and no guarantee beyond that inference.

F. H. BRADLEY:

*The Presuppositions of Critical History*

PACIFISM will continue to be frustrated until there comes such a dream of peace as will stir men like a trumpet. Peace needs its drum-taps. Peace also must marshal its myriads, not for mere parades but for thrilling collective efforts. Peace must provide social orgasms more gratifying than warfare.

The human imagination throughout the world, Steele concludes, has to be so educated that war will be seen as a dreary diversion of energy from excitements more splendid and satisfying. War is not what it was, and mankind does not understand this yet. Its triumphs have evaporated; its heroisms disappear. It is a perversion, a slacker's resort, clumsy, violent and fruitless, humanity's self-abuse. The terrible hero-warrior of old-world imagination becomes a dangerous and dirty sadist with a gas-mask on his face and poison in his fist. When that is seen clearly then—and then only—will the peace of the world be secure.

H. G. WELLS in *The Spectator*, March, 27, 1936

THERE are nations which melt together into one; others which split into several; and all have their span of historical life and are doomed to lie asleep in the Pantheons of history, hardly disturbed by the rumours of busy scholars disinterring scientific errors about what their life once was. Nations are then forms of collective life, vessels which at a given time and in a given place contain ~~and~~, therefore, shape the flow of human life. They correspond in the realm of the human spirit to what the landscape is in that of nature. They are units of reality observable at a mental glance.

SEÑOR DON SALVADOR DE MADARIAGA:

'Richard Cobden' Lecture, May 8, 1935

## CHAPTER VIII

### PACIFISM IN EMBRYO

*I. Anarchy of Pacifism—Repression and martyrdom—Individual claims.*

*II. Force—International Police—Theory and practice of Sanctions—Frustration—Big Bug Hunting.*

*III. Professor J. B. S. Haldane—Controls of Science—Ideals and Tempers.*

*IV. Pacifist sympathy—State claims—Moderates—Sex Appeal—Cowardice—Higher Duty.*

*V. Potential action—Tax Resistance—Learn Loyola—This Day and Age.*

#### I

IN spite of Mr. A. A. Milne and his Pooh Pax Plan, pacifism still remains distinct from the language of politics. There is admittedly a gulf between the cosmopolitan and the internationalist, between the internationalist and the patriot, but they are all basically politicians. The pacifist is not; whatever he may choose to become afterwards, he starts as an introvert, an anarchist for whom anarchy is not the expression of a political ideal but the consequence of a personal dogma. Beyond that pacifists split up into their national divisions.

A character in one of Mr. Huxley's novels ~~recently~~ pointed out that love is fat *liebe* to a German, sensual *amour* to a Frenchman, extravagant *amore* to an Italian, but to an Englishman just love; and Pacifism, while on the Continent it is ruthlessly stamped out, tends here to be free and repressed.

The emotional quality of pacifism among the 'King and Country' generation and its successor is difficult to detect, but when it does emerge it is clothed in austerity

and resolve, frequently justifying itself with 'Touch not mine Anointed'.

There is very little of Mr. Milne's easy simile and neat arrangement, superficial *bonhomie* and balanced indignation. The pacifist tribe is humourless and confused, and the very mystery of its conviction is its strength. Let the War Office note that there is among it material that will probably thrive on martyrdom. I have heard that the same bitter intentions animate our persecuted contemporaries on the Continent, but of them there are only spasmodic rumours from the concentration camp and its equivalent. Accordingly, our youth pacifism is tinged with a sense of privilege, of having splendid, if isolated, responsibility; is widespread and not apparently confined to any particular section of the community. It is stimulated by the motive of a moral grudge or grievance as well as by symptoms of moral convalescence; nor is this a contradiction—it is as of a patient aware of his return to health, fretting at the delay in the process of recovery, angered at his lingering weakness.

Our pacifists, therefore, seem rather to be conscious of abuses than to cling to any positive code: which suggests at once the truly operative contrast with militarism and the ideals of the Services. For your soldier is your potential socialist—appointed functions which imply that the ~~code~~ code demanding mass duties is not challenged; pacifism, on the other hand, remains stubbornly individualistic, as many functions as there are followers, as many challenges as there are codes, and in place of duties the apparent anarchy of self-discipline.

As far as politics are concerned, then, the pacifists tend to begin where they ought to leave off. If they were politicians they would regard the outbreak of war as the extreme moment of failure, instead that is just when many

of them are likely to take strength. Admittedly it catches them before they are ready, but it is only a war that can separate the waverers and the cowards from the men who are strong in the Lord.

In a previous chapter I quoted Lord Allen's claim that 'War is not something we have to resist, but something we have to prevent'. That phrase sums up the pacifist's dilemma how to reconcile a private moral standard with the claims of citizenship and public life.

## II

Our great instance is the problem of the use of force. Logically the pacifist is in a very difficult position, because persuasion is merely a form of force and, presumably, the only complete non-resister in human shape is the still-born baby; but the cheap logical wrapping round pacifist thought is not the essential. Thus in this instance of force his suspicion of the facile arguments in favour of international policing is a sound instinct. He is justified in pointing out that there is no straightforward analogy between the functions of a national and international police. If an international tribunal condemns a nation for an act of unprovoked aggression, an international police in order to carry out the sentence effectively can hardly avoid punishing innocent citizens. If every citizen is responsible for the crime of his Government, then every citizen should be punished, but this implies an enormous and hopelessly impracticable engine of retribution. To punish certain parts of the offending state is hideous discrimination whatever principle is vindicated.

We are still struggling to make the punishment bear some relation to the crime in national laws, and we have

established distinctions. We imprison a man two years for sodomy and nine months for manslaughter; we distinguish pilfering from forgery, forgery from murder. What is the Ems Telegram in the hierarchy of international crimes? Is the Japanese absorption of Manchukuo literally the same act as the Italian invasion of Abyssinia? Yet all our international police offers to combat a multitude of complex motives is a few crude and rigid sanctions.

The pacifist may claim that an international police begins to be an ideal worth striving for only when:

First, the conception of 'Peaceful Change' has developed sufficiently to make the demand for the international legislature superseding the Covenant both widespread and real. But, as Mr. Arnold-Forster has pointed out, "'Peaceful Change' is a necessary but perilous enterprise, only to be undertaken in conditions in which the menace of force is neither offered nor tolerated".<sup>1</sup> The international sanction must be the outcome of active goodwill, not the instiller of it.

Secondly, all national air forces have been abolished. We may perhaps be inclined to accept the verdict of the League of Nations Union that plans to create international armies and navies are both undesirable and impracticable. The need for an international air force cannot so easily be set aside. Pacifists are well aware that the salvation and destruction of humanity is bound up with the regulation of air armament, but what cannot be set aside either is the first condition a realist, and authority like Mr. Noel Baker lays down: 'No one now proposes that an international force should be created, unless national forces are first to disappear. There can therefore be no question of any rivalry between national forces and the new International Police. Once it is established, the International

<sup>1</sup> *The Intelligent Man's Way to Prevent War*, p. 361.



Police will be the only armed air force in the world.’<sup>1</sup> Once it is established! Mr. H. G. Wells is very wisely writing a series of articles at the moment on the ‘Anatomy of Frustration’.

The pacifist, if he cannot see himself in full agreement with the practical planners like Lord Davies and his New Commonwealth, is not necessarily the confessing visionary. Schemes for immediate action, based upon the disappearance of the British, German, French, Italian, Russian, and United States Air Forces, are about as near to present-day facts as universal prohibition based upon the disappearance of beer or international dress reform on the disappearance of clothes as we know them. In many ways the enmity between those who champion technical adjustments to create international support for international law, and those who claim that all is vanity that is not bound up with change in individual ideals, is very much that of heretics despising heretics. In the meanwhile the initiative remains with some who can authorize arms contracts and others who can carry them out.

Our young pacifists are much absorbed in grounding their plea on available and significant statistics. They have ready for everyday use the information that our Anzac heroes were mown down by Rudge Whitworth rifles, that it cost about £3,500 to kill each man murdered in the World War, that America spends a year on armaments forty times the amount spent on the Panama Canal. The ramifications of Vickers in Roumania, the loans of Schneider in Hungary, the curious attraction of armament firm directorships for distinguished government officials and old soldiers, all this and other evidence is examined with the microscopic interest of Big Bug Hunters. They know all about Mr. Mulliner and Mr.

<sup>1</sup> *Challenge of Death*, p. 210—‘International Air Police Force’.

Shearer, nor has Fritz Mandl escaped their notice. The activities at Hirtenburg, the story of Heddy Kiesler and the suppressed Ecstase film are duly docketed. Actually Mandl's career has news interest, and he should not have been allowed to remain 'a mystery man' all this time. The Putiloff scandal is a classic. M. de Wendel and Sir Herbert Lawrence are old friends. Lord Weir is a fairly rare specimen though, and is to be recommended for the closer consideration of those who have already left him out of their lists of the half-dozen most powerful men in England. It is no mean achievement to have turned swords into sugar shares and to have coincided with the will of successive governments to subsidize at a public loss the derelict beet monopoly. As the *Daily Telegraph's* Diplomatic Correspondent discreetly informed the public, he will probably be allotted the most urgent task of all, that of co-ordinating certain heavy industries on a war-time basis.<sup>1</sup> The situation is probably serious when Lord Weir gets a headline. This hunt for specimens, of course, will lead the pacifist to waive the quantum of particular individual or group sin. The late Miss Winifred Holtby's brilliant and devastating advice<sup>2</sup> will guide him to caution before allotting the blame. He will note Professor

<sup>1</sup> The correspondent summed up well in his article the impersonal atmosphere of mechanized conflict in which war organizers apparently flourish. 'It is considered', he wrote, 'that the initial period of an air struggle, employing all the existing forces of the opposing sides, could not be of longer than two weeks' duration. Thereafter would follow a lull, assuming that neither side had been defeated by the initial blow, during which industry would have to get into its stride to replace casualties in machines.'

'It is inferred that success would go to the country whose industry was first able to re-equip its forces with the physical means to renew the fight. It is here that national industry organized in time of peace on a war basis would give its country a great advantage.'

<sup>2</sup> *Apology for Armourers*, pp. 113-38. In *Challenge to Death*. Also the article 'Who Wants Another War?' in *L.N.U. Quarterly News*, Summer 1933.

Hilton's balance-sheet, which calls post-war armament expenditure 'a mere trouser button' compared with that on beer, gambling and amusement over the same time, but which recognizes it as being sufficient to have ruled out the need for a Means Test.

Never has the idea been so popular that to be well informed is to know the worst. However, it must be admitted that there are significant limitations to the pacifist thirst for enlightenment.

### III

Professor J. B. S. Haldane wrote a preface to a symposium I collected of sixteen Growing Opinions. In it he somewhat heavily underlined an argument he is fond of underlining. 'People who try to employ scientific method in the social sphere are apt to think only of experiment and to forget the controls. I have the same quarrel with Mr. Johnson and Mr. Hardie. They assume that Mr. Baldwin is right in his gloomy prophecies about the next War. He is perfectly right, if science goes on being applied to destruction and is not applied to organizing the civilian population and rebuilding our towns so that an air attack would not mean the end of our civilization. This is not merely a political problem, but a scientific and technical one. . . . Mr. Baldwin is not going to take up this problem, nor is Mr. Lansbury . . . if our civilization crashes it will be at least in part because our younger politicians are unaware of the realities of science . . . here is my challenge to youth. Science is power if you can understand it, fate if you cannot. Which is it going to be?' He defined controls as 'experiments resembling the first in all respects but one and not leading to the same result'. He felt that if the Soviet system succeeded

as against our own it would be because of the scientific training young Communists receive. He instanced the Sverdlov University of Moscow.

We must agree at once that pacifist thought has but little equipment to face the scientific world. Hence no doubt the attempt to hide behind Christianity, the most formidable individualist refuge from the onslaughts of science. When it means waging a war, I admit I am one of the millions for whom science is fate, and in peace time have no adequate means of deciding between Freeth and Lefabure as to the menace of gas attacks. I cannot say whether or no our taxes are wisely invested in the Hood class of battleship, and can only rely on Sir Roger Keyes' judgment, which instinct otherwise would warn me to reject, if asked to comment on his admiration for the new anti-aircraft gun.

It is, however, questionable whether those who have had a better technical education than a public school affords are similarly handicapped. Further, Sverdlov cannot have much that it can teach Glasgow. But even if we have all reached that stage of culture where we are aware of the implications of scientific technique upon social life, it does not follow that we can take Professor Haldane's advice in order to save civilization from destruction.

Most pacifists are repelled by the idea that if science is the potential it appears to be it can only cancel out war within the old framework of National attack *v.* National defence. The crossbow, the longbow, the Lewis gun, phosgene—all duly counteracted with the ingenuity and cunning of Homeric gods.

If we admit just a small fraction of war's new scientific frightfulness we must either raise science to some higher destiny than the checkmating of its own devildoms or

submit to the penalties of inept ideals. The mood of the majority seems to be to submit. The duty of the thinkers, experimenters, manipulators of controls is thus intensified. Pacifists find the way of Dædalus the way of death.

What science has done is to open up the war problem and relate it with a number of other social problems which before seemed only to run parallel to each other and have no connecting points. Its method has made futile the search for the one Great Cause of war and has thus put the Socialist crying in the economic wilderness on much the same level of dogmatic unreality as the Biblical fundamentalists who trace the origin of social discord to an apple eaten some time during the year 4004 B.C.

So far science has acted as a creative agent. Staggering achievements of biology are saving and improving more lives than many past wars have succeeded in taking away, and scientific research is showing that we have fights ahead with forms of life conditioned to undermine man's continued career on the planet which are sterner and more urgent than any we can try to devise for ourselves.

The scientist is being asked to waste his time and abandon his proper functions when the government requires his services to stultify national warfare by technical adjustments within the system. The duties may be necessary in the attempt to mitigate specific horrors, but reflect only the interruption of the scientists' real work for the salvation of man. Julian Huxley has shown that our Government is spending about ten times as much of our money on research into war materials as upon the human sciences of psychology and sociology; and whatever challenge you may choose to throw at youth, you cannot avoid Mr. Huxley's retort that, 'if you are willing to pay for more men and more facilities in

war research than in, say, medical research, you will get more results adapted to killing people and less adapted to keeping them alive'.<sup>1</sup>

Many pacifists are apparently shrewd enough to realize that the significant material resources are on their side, and hope that if they keep quiet and do not go out of their way to provoke the forces of darkness, the manifold social and economic intercourse transcending mere national frontiers will make for a wider allegiance, and automatically take the sting out of nationalism. If men are completely dependent on the tribe for their food, they will be quick to anger on the tribe's behalf; if they are similarly dependent for their food upon world operations involving all the complex and delicate substitutes for barter—credits, exchange equalization, and systematic good-faith—when once that world dependence has been fully realized and habit has created its own ethic, then will men be touchy for the honour of world peace and security.

Pacifism has accordingly many patient followers who believe (like the Chinese in their attitude to the Japanese minority in Manchuria) that they can afford to wait until nationalism has been absorbed, and that they have only to come out into the open and champion the essentials of their idealism during the temporary set-back of a national war.

This means that their opinions are tucked away and implied as long as there is peace, however precarious; perhaps this helps to explain why a cult which might otherwise have been expected to fatten on resistance is so quiescent, its acts of aggression being contained for the most part in an extreme readiness to engage in Press correspondence and homely argument. As Mr. Wells

<sup>1</sup> Julian Huxley, 'Peace Through Science', in *Challenge to Death*, p. 292.

has pointed out, any cause that contains ideals of world-wide scope tends to put too great a strain on the nerves of its members and make them bad-tempered, which, he thinks, explains the individual arrogance of many young Communists, but pacifists remain, if we exclude, the somewhat artificial anger and illiteracy of Mr. Ezra Pound, witnesses of their nickname. For apart, from their belief in an ultimate vindication, their self-control is sustained by the undertones of Christianity.

## IV

Confucius said to the Chinese Prince, 'Sir, in carrying on your government, why should you use killing at all? Let your evinced desires be for what is good and the people will be good. The grass must bend when the wind blows over it.' Christians applaud, but the doctrine is more than half a world away from codes of citizenship accepted in the West, for the Christian attitude to the State which no Gospel text can wholly explain away is an implied challenge to all iniquity, however high the place.

Fortified by the semblance of Christian technique, the pacifist is prepared to find iniquity lurking in nearly all human material. His sense of sin is sharpened. His analysis tends to become so diverse that if fully carried out it would involve him in a life-study similar to that of Paretos though lacking Paretos' altruistic intentions.

In what way is the pacifist to be satisfied? If war breaks out, the State has failed in its primary functions, the individual is released from any obligations. He cannot expect the State's protection, but the moral chain has snapped, social remedies in peace time have failed. During war, then, the individual is to act solely for the preservation of his own life, in the condition of *homo*

*civitati lupus*. From the salvation of the many to the salvation of ego—a regrettable decline in idealism, but, as war is wholly anti-social, advisable for the units to cry *sauve qui peut* rather than tamper with compromise. There is no principle in our national order that stands for endurance. We can destroy ourselves as irremediably as the Aztecs, our monument a few twisted girders. The principle of individual life must be vindicated from the onslaught of men.

The pacifist finds a consolation in such arguments. He has trained himself in the arts of loneliness, has developed a hatred for mass orgasms. 'Why be lonely?' asks the Personal Column—'Why get together,' asks the Pacifist—and both seek to cure our waste of human resources.

The assumption, then, is that war is, or soon will be, absolutely destructive. I will try and sketch how this assumption modifies pacifist sympathy and balance by two imaginary pacifist soliloquies.

'Don't you think the Moderates have a remedy?'

'You mean the League of Nations Union? Well, quite apart from moral considerations,' our pacifist replies, 'it exploits purposeless energy; there is a superabundance of Committees and Conferences. We deserve to be called a Committee-minded nation, but it is nothing to be particularly proud of. Committees atrophy effective action. The paraphernalia of minute-books and petty officials merely disguise fatuity. Conferences are worse. Committees are means, Conferences are almost always dead ends. "By resolving to do, he did nothing but resolve", was Coleridge's summary of Hamlet's *malaise*, and it applies to healthy young men and women who quietly decay passing comparatively wholesome resolutions—"We call on the Government to further the cause of



disarmament, to take the lead at Geneva. We deplore increased expenditure on National Defences. We adjourn." Bodies like the L.N.U. are not doing enough to discourage our natural desire to escape into fantasy while pretending to do the real thing. Like the 8 o'clock Communion, it has got into the clutches of middle-aged spinsters who, on the off-chance of a Great Dividend, make their spiritual speculation by a bend of the knee and a note in the offertory box. Their political speculation is decorous as well; by organizing socially for a local branch of the L.N.U. they give the appearance of being internationally-minded, and when the war breaks out their consciences are at rest. They have made their gesture, they have done their bit. Let us pray that they will be forgiven.'

The grievance against the L.N.U. is not wholly without foundation, though here again political indifference undermines its full significance. The decisive question was put to Lord Cecil at the Oxford Union by a don: Would the League of Nations support only such candidates at Elections who would make known in no hedging manner their support of a League policy? and the indecisive reply was given: a fatality, for the L.N.U. has little to lose and much to gain by an active intervention in the fray of party politics. The policy of the present leaders is respectability without responsibility, impartiality without discrimination.

If we transfer our attention from the anaemic to the sexual, we will find our pacifist is burdened with the same extravagant uneasiness.

'You mention War and Women?—exactly, *they* have the initiative in chivalry. If enough women thought uniforms were ugly, regiments ridiculous, war indecent, men would probably avoid tunics, shun the Services and

refuse to fight. The implied conventions of love-making are often the germs of explicit and murderous social codes. As it is,' continues our angel of anarchy, 'there are still too many sexually desirable girls or "Mothers of Six" who must have their satisfaction from men as heroes in fancy dress, who are still actuated by the painful desire to send their lovers and sons away in order to taste the delirium of their return. The feminine mind is particularly warlike in this weakness for the protracted bitter-sweet. "No Guns, No Girls" was the slogan of August 1914. The patriotic prostitute is still too much with us.'

For however indirectly we touch on cowardice, the pacifist will tend to mouth his words and lose his temper. Let us admit that in terms of blackmail, white feathers may well be regarded to-day as symbolizing the moral weight of those who send them; but openly to accuse the pacifist of cowardice is another matter. Cowardice permeates most human activity, and is just as likely to award a man a Victoria Cross as turn him into a Conscientious Objector. Whether in a given instance the social cowardice and physical bravery of a man who joins up is as great as the physical cowardice and social bravery of another who does not, is a very real problem of values: but is also an infuriating abstraction, and helps to intensify bitterness when linked with disturbing factors that range from military bands to sex appeal. The cowardice conflict seems more than anything else to narrow the range of our pacifists' sympathy. Often they find it excessively hard to believe that the motives of citizens who are prepared to do their bit and defend their country at the bidding of their King are those of honourable men in a majority doing what they sincerely think to be right. If it comes to provocation, the pacifist has the higher duty

to remain unmoved. He has first to examine how the military monopoly over valour has come about, and, secondly, in doing so, to avoid the temptation, neatly caught by Mr. Guedalla, of 'a sense of rectitude coming from an almost total absence of popular support'.

## V

If the intellectual and emotional attitude I have tried to imply is at all widespread, what immediate action might pacifists take were the situation to deteriorate rapidly in the next few months? The movement shows no signs of coming to political life, and the scope is limited, provided, of course, the authorities' suicidal talk of conscription in peace-time does not materialize. If it did it would no doubt sink all difference or indifference and stimulate a truly formidable and united body of pacifist abstainers.

Perhaps a somewhat hackneyed suggestion is most akin to their temperament, perhaps they would derive new strength and purpose from withholding a part of their rates and income-tax used on a re-armament programme.

This particular form of conscientious objection proved extremely difficult to deal with during the controversy over the religious provisions of the 1902 Education Act. The same procedure, of course, applied literally to the armaments nexus would involve the highest absurdity. There can hardly be enough pacifists in England to tamper with even one of the three hundred millions to be raised on the White Paper. However, the effectiveness of the campaign would not rest on its economic potentialities. The value would have to be symbolic, the default a token; appeal would have to be made to the deep instinct of the British

people to express moral indignation through specific illegality and petty trespass.

After all, it was only £1 that John Hampden refused to pay into His Majesty's Ship Money revenues. Let us assume that Dr. Sheppard is successful in the claim he makes that he can raise the number of his peace-pledgers from 60,000 to 200,000 in the next few months. It is surely not too rash to claim also that of the new number at least the old number pay income-tax. His appeal has achieved response from all sections of the community. 60,000 deductions each of £1 from income-tax early next year would be quite a formidable precedent. 60,000 prosecutions, 60,000 sentences. It is some such simple individual leverage that would remove the load of mass fear and uncertainty, test the worth of a pledge. In addition, by making income-tax the lever, it would be possible to see how decisively pacifist idealism was a guiding principle among the so-called middle classes in England. Symbolic resistance to a given political or economic policy must start among them and be sustained by them. In the circumstances pacifism by organized default might get nearer to the language of politics than Mr. Milne's Oaths sworn solemnly by King Edward VIII, Herr Hitler, President Lebrun, King Victor Emanuel, and secretly broken on their behalf by Foreign Offices, Steel Combines, and Banking interests. It might well be a more significant advertisement, even, than Dr. Sheppard's Peace Circus of international celebrities making Special Appearances in the name of Goodwill. Income-tax resistance would still have first-class publicity value, slogans would abound—(Peace Picketing—Battleship Money—Pax Rebate or Peace Duty). Further, the movement might suggest the pattern of action for pacifists in other countries to fill in for themselves. At

least its success here would be in strict proportion to the confidence it created among Peace minorities abroad. The attempts to make persistent and judicious contact through frontiers would give pacifists their adventure and undermine the accusation of inert purpose. They would have to learn their Loyola and base their designs on best Jesuit.

Even then their plea would be a stern denial, they would provoke force and lack the warmth of tolerance; but, on the other hand, it is often more advisable to work for the positive and formal expressions of an ideal deep in the heart of the world and hard to extract, than to sit and expect some saturation of opinion. Even in terms of ethic to act within obvious limits which stretch only as far as the eye of a particular generation or nationality can see, is perhaps more admirable than to wait obstinately for clearer visions and better days—for the visions fade and the days disappear.

As for 'sapping the moral fibre', I should like to know exactly how the 'moral fibre' is improved by ascending into an aeroplane and dropping bombs of Lewisite on to hospitals, which will be the chief occupation of the dupes of the next war, in every country.

Whose moral fibre is likely to be improved by this little sport? The aviators or the invalids?

But of course it goes deeper than that, as those who do me the honour of reading my little book will realize. Major Yeats Brown hits the nail on the head when he writes that 'the whole pacifist case rests on a denial of nationality'. It does.

We pacifists must be honest enough to admit it. We have to lower flags that we love, to deny causes and movements that are glamorous and profitable, to be prepared to wear on our sleeves the badge, 'Traitor to His Country'. It isn't pleasant. It isn't easy. But we must do it. Somebody must begin, lest all should end.

BEVERLEY NICHOLS:

*Letter to the 'Daily Telegraph', July 25th, 1933*

## CHAPTER IX<sup>1</sup>

### LITERARY CONVERSION

#### LUNCH WITH MR. BEVERLEY NICHOLS

*Conversion of Mr. Nichols—The Garrick—An alliance—Cooked Tests—Ministerial dilemma—Faith and Anarchy—Extreme Pacifism—Boys in Red Tunics—Security and Expediency—Dick Sheppard—War Sermons—Buchmanism—Pacifist Propaganda—Bowler Hat.*

HIS fame was firmly established upon the appeal he made to middle-aged ladies by his portrayal of the herbaceous border; and the wider and more nebulous public delighted in him as a literary *enfant terrible*.

But in 1933 Mr. Beverley Nichols abandoned flounce, put away the bland detachment of culture and became urgently serious, using all the latent force of his brilliant descriptive technique in a last endeavour to rouse the peoples from their prostration before the juggernaut of war. *Cry Havoc* is one of the most significant literary *volte-faces* of recent years. The new Mr. Nichols candidly confessed in the opening chapter addressed to H. G. Wells, 'this is not a book, only a few desperate inquiries by one who in the past has been pleased to use his pen only to trace pretty patterns'. Not every one would be able to get away with this, but Mr. Nichols is both favoured and embarrassed by his election (no option of refusal) to a place in the valhalla of the Book Snobs.

The heart always tends to beat a little faster when one is due to be the guest of a successful author at lunch for the first time, particularly so when publicity has succeeded in its object of giving the impression that he is just a shade more than human.

I was invited by Mr. Nichols to meet him at one o'clock

in that classical labyrinth of classical memories, the Garrick Club. I was ushered into an impressive waiting-room where three gentlemen of the bluest blood and the most admirable social technique introduced themselves to each other, ordered drinks, told the funny story (cockney) and wondered who was responsible for funny stories. One of them said 'the Stock Exchange', but another added the queer qualification that that was probably true only before the War when the Stock Exchange was 'doing well'. . . . I looked at an evening paper and was surprised to see that the Committee of Five's warlike meeting got the headline above a far more bloody and exciting business, Max Baer's sensational failure in an effort to flatten out 'that sepia slugger', Joe Louis.

Then Mr. Nichols hurried in, and the ordeal of the opening remark was rapidly negotiated. 'How depressing everything is!' he suggested. The great relief was Mr. Nichols' manifest humanity. His voice was soft and eager. He was, to use the phrase of another age and context, 'well appointed'.

He was quite small and chubby in the best sense. Lunch was not easy to find—the Garrick was full—and the journey to it was distracted by members who seemed to emerge from nowhere in particular, and remarked either just 'Hullo, Beverley', or 'Is that arrangement all right for you?' 'How difficult it is to get away from all that,' Mr. Nichols remarked with justifiable relish as we found our way to one of those sedate club lounges made for men only. The atmosphere is not one of sexual repression, which is often exciting, but of a drab world of sexual unawareness. Mr. Nichols proceeded to reveal his opinions with a delightful facility, whilst near by a group of expansive men in big arm-chairs were discussing the income of one of their friends.



'The reason for my depression is,' I said, 'that I am beginning to suspect that an ultimate solution does not rest in the League as it stands. It is not a League at all, but an Anglo-French alliance. When I wrote *Cry Havoc* the prospects were different. Germany was there, and Japan was there.'

I commented that I had first begun to suspect League Sanctions after a close consideration of the Archbishop of York's now famous broadcast. 'You must, of course, remember,' Mr. Nichols remarked later on, 'that the Archbishop is a supporter of the National Government.'

'I am writing a book on Christianity,' he continued, 'I've been doing so for some years, and after a prolonged study I've come to believe in the historic truth of Christ's life. I'm of course only one of millions to have done so. What is more, I've discovered that in every case those texts from the Gospels always used by the militarists are either 'cooked' or misunderstood by them. For instance, "Think not that I am come to send peace on earth. I am come not to send peace but a sword", is not a call to arms, but a prophecy of dissensions within the family; and Christ's reply, "It is enough", addressed to the disciples' "Lord, here are two swords", is not militarism but nothing other than the greatest example of irony in history.'

'I've just had a row with an ex-Cabinet Minister,' Mr. Nichols remarked as we went farther into the labyrinth for lunch. 'He was once one of the most important men in England—God help us! Recently he could not be persuaded to appear at Covent Garden on a Wagner evening, because "it was that beastly Wagner who helped to create the German spirit".' This man had said, though, that Italy must be allowed to expand, but Mr. Nichols had pointed out to him that statistics over the last three years

had proved 'that Mussolini's orders putting people to bed with each other had only resulted in a decline in the birth rate. Mr. Nichols supplied the statistics—'So expansion was a commercial matter, the objective was to obtain Abyssinian oil and coffee and minerals.' He had further asked him whether or not the Christian principle to 'Give and it shall be given unto 'you' had been the influence governing the action of any one of the Allied statesmen at Versailles, and he could, naturally enough, offer no satisfactory answer.

The main feature and importance of this interview for me at least was that Mr. Nichols' thought has made a great advance, curiously enough, both in its destructive and constructive elements. Canon Raven in his challenging book *Is War Obsolete?* writes of his 1933 outlook. 'To read even so sincere and passionate a *cri du cœur* as Mr. Beverley Nichols' *Cry Havoc* is to be constantly reminded of the neurosis from which he is manifestly suffering.'<sup>1</sup> This is probably an exaggeration, but the neurotic sentiment which wastes itself away in the desire of negation if not explicit in the text was, somehow, persistently there. The first impression I got after reading the book was that the room had been swept entirely clean of the conventional prejudice-and-ignorance devil, but that there had not been quite enough attention paid to the possible entrance of seven other devils, or to the psychological, social, and political form they might take. The danger was not fully recognized. The lack of a strictly positive faith weakened the theme. 'My individual problem', he wrote in the introductory chapter, 'in the face of war no longer seems so simple that it can be solved by conscientious objection.'

To-day he made it quite clear that he finds conscien-

<sup>1</sup> *Is War Obsolete?* p. 40.

tious objection easier, not by short-cutting argument, but by the reinforcement of his belief in the validity of Christ's ethic as it is being preached and lived by the Buchman Group Movement.

He said, 'I am coming now to believe that to follow Christ all the way is the only way. There is much to be said for the conduct of the Quakers. One must be prepared in the last resort to submit to Force. It is no use resisting Force with Force. Why not Great Britain disarm completely? One nation must make the first gesture to the world. Great Britain should make it. There is, of course, no harm in keeping a few boys in red tunics to march up and down in front of the Palace.' (There was hardness in his voice and bitter implication in his smile as he looked up to see how I reacted to this phrase).

'Let us lose our Empire if it must be so, let the Germans come and rule over us if they will, Force only breeds Force. If you are going to describe this talk of ours at all, I would ask you to stress this above everything, that the world to-day is perishing of security and of expediency.'

This assertion arose from a question I asked about the relation of the Papacy to national disputes. He said that if only the Pope would excommunicate all those fighting in an Italo-Abyssinian conflict, the Italians would be in a turmoil and Mussolini probably thwarted. I said the trouble is, the Pope is almost certainly afraid that the Catholic flock would not follow him. 'The trouble is,' he replied, 'the Pope may be an excellent diplomatist, but he is not a Christian if he is not prepared to sacrifice everything in an emergency.' I commented generally on the even more difficult position of specifically national churches. 'Their position is impossible,' he said. I told him that I was hoping to discuss this among other problems

with Dr. Sheppard. 'Dr. Sheppard is an important man and he is taking up the right line.' I rather timidly suggested that he must at times be rather hard put to it to explain away his position within the Anglican Church.

For the only time Mr. Nichols was fierce with me rather than with the world. 'It is not for Dr. Sheppard to explain away anything, but for the Church to which he belongs to reform and purify itself and come round to his position. I would like to bring to your notice a small book in which has been collected a series of sermons preached during the War. There is one in there by the Bishop of London, preached from the pulpit of Westminster Abbey on Advent Sunday, in which he defends the right to "kill Germans: to kill them, not for the sake of killing, but to save the world; to kill the good as well as the bad, to kill the young men as well as the old, to kill those who have shown kindness to our wounded". . . .'<sup>1</sup>

Mr. Nichols appears to be finding in the very anarchy that is hidden away in Christ's logic an active and even life-giving element that will overcome the passivity of peace while removing the danger of war. I asked him further about the Groups. Was the movement an excuse for emotional excess, for giving up the intellectual struggle? (Canon Raven has some weighty things to say about the dangers of a too ready acceptivity.) No, the movement was not primarily emotional at all. It satisfied all the demands of his reason. He described his impressions of a meeting at the Majestic Cinema, Oxford. It holds about 3,000 people, and there were about 3,500 there. On the platform there were mill girls, a company director, a Welsh down-and-out, a Nazi, and a Jew. The most amazing messages were read out. Mr. Bennett reported

<sup>1</sup> Quoted from *The Potter and the Clay*, p. 42 (Wells Gardner, Darton Co., 1917).

that Canada was proving easier to govern since the visit there of the Groups.

I asked Mr. Nichols about Buchman. 'He is a great and splendid man much maligned', was the reply. He went so far as to say that Buchman was at the head of 'the greatest movement that our life to-day can offer'. That it had taken such a hold in Denmark and the Scandinavian countries that war was impossible for those peoples. I agreed it was undeniable that the Baltic, which one might expect to be a bone of economic contention, was probably in that respect one of the safest seas in the world. What an advantage it would be if only Hitler was aware of the potency of passive resistance.

'He ought to be,' Mr. Nichols murmured, while helping me to what he called 'an eighth of an inch' more of chicken *fricassé*, 'the French army of occupation in the Ruhr turned out to be a heavy expense—but merely to the French Government.'

One irritating problem to which Mr. Nichols drew my attention to was the often unsatisfactory way in which pacifist doctrines were organized and spread. In particular he referred to the activities of the editorial staff of a certain intellectual and somewhat pink-socialist periodical. He was invited to help them, but he found no method or order. No specific duties were assigned though a great deal of time was consumed. He often asked in vain what at a given moment he or they were supposed to be doing and mildly suggested, how about a proper room to work in, how about stationery with an address on it, and how about the other amenities of secretarial and committee routine. '“A great idea,” they said, “if only we had the funds.” I offered to raise some myself, and contended that it would be a good idea to ask one or two duchesses to subscribe to the cause—who would, I was

sure, be excellent pacifists if they only knew how. At this there was an uproar. It appeared that the unspeakable and been spoken.' Mr. Nichols strongly affirmed that this and similar stressing of the necessity for a class war before the pacifist millennium can be brought into existence is both impracticable and morally subversive.

We left the lunch-table and our meal-time neighbours, Mr. Owen Nares and his son Geoffrey, who were the only two personalities I recognized as having a *prima facie* right to be in the club at all. The great pictures on the walls of past stage celebrities were mocked by a general atmosphere of shooting in Scotland and service in India. Mr. Nichols led me back to the lounge for coffee, and then very kindly proceeded to write to a member of the Christian Community living in Brown's Hotel, a note of introduction which contained a testimonial—disarming in more senses than one—of the bearer as 'a great Pacifist'.

While he was at a writing-desk I picked up an *Evening Standard* and was regaled by Low's pungency, the theme being the embarrassing support given by militarist movements to the National Government's League policy. I came to the confident conclusion that Low's passionate insight combined with his sophistication is too potent to be satisfied by any known form of human government, but wondered whether in this instance he had got the moral right; for I heard a sandy-haired man (Guards officer breed) assert blandly to a friend, 'Don't think I'll fight in the Abyssinian War. Doesn't rouse my interest enough, and it's too far away.'

Mr. Nichols was in a hurry: we left the mature, peaceful dignity of the club for the laughter and movement of Leicester Square and Charing Cross. He took a taxi at St. Martin's and vanished into the huge turmoil of the Strand.

As I walked home through St. James's Park, my mind with tiresome one-note obstinacy was obsessed with a paradox.

I had always thought a Bowler Hat was an enemy to the clear-eyed acceptance of anything, and I was now faced with trying to reconcile Mr. Nichols' youthfulness, candour, flair, spontaneity, directness, and the like, with Mr. Nichols' tight-fitting little Bowler Hat.

THE issue is a spiritual one. For myself my Pacifism begins and ends with the spirit and teaching of Jesus Christ. I cannot believe that He would authorize or permit me to kill my brother, therefore whatever it cost and whatever the consequences I must refuse to fight.

CANON H. R. L. SHEPPARD:

*Foreword to 'We did not Fight'*



## CHAPTER X

### ABSOLUTE CHRISTIAN

#### DR. SHEPPARD AND THE SHEEP

*Citizenship—Dr. Sheppard's Dilemma—His personality—Publicity and the Albert Hall—Gandhi and the Force problem—The Archbishop's position—Peace at any Price—The claims of Christianity—Anglicanism—The Sermon on the Mount—Ignorance and the time of Testing—Moral indifference—Negation—L.N.U.'s acquiescence—Cabinet Conversion—Toryism in the Church—Eddington quoted—Thoughts in conclusion.*

IT is not until I have entered the bottle-neck of the Strand that I become really aware of my citizenship. By the time I have reached the Law Courts, crossed the City's threshold, become merged in the hive of Fleet Street I adorn the Corporation. Only am I elected Mayor when I get a first glimpse of St. Paul's and make my way up Ludgate Hill.

I was due to lunch with Dr. Sheppard at one o'clock and had only reached the bottle-neck by ten to, so my civic promotion was more rapid than dignified. As I stood before the massive door of 1 Amen Court, it occurred to me I had not given much thought to the form my questions should take. I had met Dr. Sheppard before and had been immediately fascinated by the ease and spontaneity of his talk, the wide range of his conversational interest. I was meeting him now at a difficult time. Yesterday at the Bournemouth Church Congress the Archbishop of Canterbury as the Head of the Church had declared unequivocally against his central tenet in these terms: 'I have great respect for the motives and consistency of those who seem to insist that in no circumstances can a Christian countenance the use of Force,

but I am quite unable to see how it could be applied within the Community of the State without disaster.' To-morrow Dr. Sheppard was due to reply and lay bare his conscience. To-day his mood was one not so much of secret elation before a clear-cut dispute as of uncertainty and doubt before an overwhelming problem. All through lunch and the talk afterwards the dominating impression was that 'Dick' Sheppard, with all the gifts that arouse affection in the most unlikely human material, with St. Martin's as a constant reminder of an almost fantastic mass popularity, was nevertheless a very lonely man. And this is not unnatural. Great Christian personalities—and he is surely one of the greatest of our time—are always likely to be elusive and the mass of their devotees to be with them yet not of them.

Dr. Sheppard's original purpose was to separate lunch from the discussion, but, I was glad to find that the conversation had merged into the themes I was wanting before the cheese and biscuits.

I remember that he expressed a high admiration of General Smuts' recent speeches and thought it astonishing that to-day's great Imperial philosopher-statesman should have come from South Africa and the Boers. I referred to a comment in *We Say No* that Smuts was probably the direct authentic successor of Balfour, and he suggested that I ought to get his views on the future of the League. Keeping in mind some of the factors working against the League system I mentioned in particular the publicity problem. 'The time has come,' I suggested, 'for a big campaign to be launched against the Press Lords.' He said that he had discussed the idea of it with his own followers, but was of the opinion that a good two years' study of newspaper propaganda, which should be incorporated in a book, was required

before any effective action could be taken. On the whole he thought the Government were very wise over publicity and propaganda. 'I was due to address a big meeting at the Albert Hall and I thought of exploiting what I considered then and still consider a good publicity device; namely, that of splashing across all the bills in tube and bus on the day of the meeting another bill announcing "All Tickets Sold", but I found I was not allowed to do this.' He said that the B.B.C. was necessarily now something of a Government Department. 'The organization naturally must incline to caution, I do not see how it can do much otherwise. For instance, there was Jack Payne: his popularity was almost alarming. Imagine Jack Payne denouncing the National Government in the Albert Hall—the place would be overflowing with Jack Payne's supporters.'

The wireless is still a toy, but a dangerous one. I thought of the ideal printed each week on the front of the *Radio Times*: 'Nation shall speak Peace unto Nation', and then of a few of the realities—of the Dolfuss murder, when about a dozen desperate youths seized the wireless station, hoaxed all Austria, and by their prank were not far from breaking the régime and supplying the lighted match for yet another European bonfire; of Father Coughlin and his Little New Deal of St. Francis—Dr. Sheppard asked if I had ever heard his voice. He pointed out that it is when one is shunning publicity that one's name tends immediately to be included in the Talk of the Town.

We went back to his long and peaceful writing-room. It has large windows and there is an impression of an authentic garden. There is no distant roar of traffic; it is an antiquarian's, a philosopher's room. It is not really the proper place for current controversy. Perhaps Dr.

Sheppard realized this, for he took a glorious gold watch from his pocket and wound it up. While it made delicate tinkling sounds he remarked with very great satisfaction: 'Napoleon had that watch at Waterloo. You will say to me, "Liar"'—but his evidence was at once authentic and intriguing. He then stood leaning with one elbow against a high mantel-shelf. I had come in armed with a note-book and he good-humouredly awaited a bombardment—all I managed to put down was the one word 'Gandhi'. The conversation remained informal, and the blood, I suppose, having rushed away from his arm he was soon squatting on a small backless tapestry chair.

'Gandhi' was a reference to an anecdote. Maude Royden once asked Gandhi what attitude should we adopt to the soldiers on the North-west Frontier, 'You should honour them,' he replied, 'for they are risking their lives while you are thousands of miles away safely at home, but if you approach the tribesmen without the backing of arms the first generation may perish, and the second and even the third, but ultimately you will triumph in a way that soldiers never can.' 'I believe, deep down, that he is right,'<sup>1</sup> Dr. Sheppard said.

'The Archbishop's speech yesterday,' I suggested, 'really puts the Force question in its baldest form?'—Dr. Lang

<sup>1</sup> While attending the Round Table Conference Gandhi addressed a small political society at Westminster School. The magnetism of his personality defies description. Like Robespierre, he is a cold fanatic and is a master of intimate histrionics. I noted down one or two of his characteristic phrases which with soft voice inflections had an almost lyrical value.

'Greece boasts her one Thermopylae but I have heard it said that India has as many Thermopylaes as there are streets in a great city.' If one of his emancipation ideals were to triumph—'I am sure there would be dancing in the houses for many days.' During his speech he said, 'I leave you to consider a new bravery—the bravery of non-resistance.'

had asserted that 'Peace in itself was not an ideal . . . Peace was secondary and derivative. There was therefore no intrinsic worth in mere Peace, if it meant acquiescence in the violation of justice and the rule of law.' Dr. Sheppard reflected and then replied very quietly, 'I say this in all humility, but I am merely trying to follow the words and precepts of my Master. In the last resort it is a matter of my conscience. When I speak at the Assembly there will, I expect, be great divergence. Of course, they will give me a hearing and be very polite but will have nothing to do with me. To my mind the Church and its leaders seem to be discovering yet another pretext for us all to engage in yet another Holy War. In 1914 the "overwhelming reason" was Democracy: now it is International Law. There are plenty of other noble causes, but they do not seem to be fully aware that going to war over them probably means as a preliminary the massacre of an odd 100,000 men, women, and children who are entirely innocent of the dispute and in their daily lives unaware of its implications. It is the poor people who have to suffer.' And several times during our talk he referred to the Caesarian attitude of certain leaders of the Church, especially the intellectuals.

Conversation fortunately knows no literary laws of continuity, but the main burden of his bitterness was that on the one hand 'several of them have had no real experience of what modern warfare means. I have, and I know more about its horrors than they do.' For them the war was still very largely an academic theme, an abstraction. On the other hand, 'what grieves me is that they are so much the most able men in the country when it comes to putting forward a given point of view. If I wanted some one to champion bodyline bowling or Jaeger underwear I would rather have the cause expounded by

them than by any one else I can think of. Seriously, one feels extremely diffident in pitting one's own small resources against such talent, particularly when one knows that it commands the support of almost the entire Church. Nevertheless, I have chosen my course and I must carry on to the end.'

*A. C. J.*: 'You believe then that in the last resort Peace with injustice is better than War to enforce an international legal system?'

*Dr. Sheppard*: 'Yes. My reading of Christian ethic leads me to stand for Peace at any price. But this does not at once rule out all remedies or at once destroy the possibility of any international action.'

*A. C. J.*: 'The problems of the moment are so pressing that the growing demand is for instant action with immediate effect.'

*Dr. Sheppard*: 'The claims of Christianity go beyond this and in any case are not merely of this world.'

I asked whether he did not sometimes feel that the Anglican Church was unduly hampered in as far as it was a State pensionary. He did not blaze with indignation for himself as Mr. Nichols did on his behalf. He quietly believed that Anglicanism offered the best and most reasonable ecclesiastical system, and that Disestablishment would merely make the Church a narrow sect and cult within the State and almost certainly weaken its influence in everyday affairs. On the other hand, he was extremely anxious for a much closer union of the Churches. I said I noted the Archbishop was calling together a representative conference to discuss the international situation but he had not asked the Roman Catholics—'I don't expect they would have come in any

case,' Dr. Sheppard remarked, 'and for that matter, why hasn't he asked the Christian pacifists?'

Later on he repeated Mr. Nichols' plea: 'If only the Pope would act!' but then added that he thought the Concordat was fatal and had taken away his initiative. I do not know whether Dr. Sheppard meant that the Roman Church was powerful enough to stand on its own, and that the English Church was not; perhaps the apparent inconsistency is smoothed over if we keep in mind the peculiar temporal status of the Vatican. I remarked that the struggle between Empire and Papacy, in spite of historic facts, raised fundamentals which were applicable to to-day's needs but that there had never been a decisive solution. There was no final judgment for us to go on. This has a particular as well as a widely general reference; if the Rome Agreement be regarded from roughly Lord Acton's perspective of historical sequence and standard working through moral purpose and sanction, it may well be ultimately condemned as an impossible compromise.

All through, Dr. Sheppard stressed the difficulty and uncertainty he is in before perhaps the profoundest problems humanity has ever known. He told me of the pathetic aspiration for peace in the huge audiences he addresses—'it is all too easy to rouse them into ecstatic acceptance of arguments. A reference to the Sermon on the Mount and every doubt is satisfied.' For more pathetic still is the ignorance of the dumb multitudes of our population. There is but little stability. It would be rash to forecast how many would remain and withstand the time of testing. But, as it is, Dr. Sheppard expects by demagogic appeal to raise the numbers of Peace Pledges from 60,000 to 200,000 in a very short time. He is, however, not merely up against the too

facile support for a delusively self-evident appeal; other factors undermine perhaps more dangerously.

There is the wide belt of moral indifference and laziness. 'While in church, we profess that we are going to leap over hurdles, but once outside, most of us only take a short stroll down Ludgate Hill!'

The cause lacks intellectual support. Scholarship's first reaction seems always to be towards a reservation. 'We cannot, of course, expect to get a glimpse of Absolute Truth, but I do wish people would oppose me more violently and hate my views more openly.'

I suggested that a probable element of weakness was that his campaign seemed to express itself in Denial and Renunciation. Its form is: 'I *renounce* war and *never* again will I support or sanction another', and the slogan is even more direct with its '*We say No*'. He agreed emphatically that this objection was the core of the problem; but he offered no alternative or remedy but instead deplored the lack of moral leadership in the country. 'Viscount Cecil, for instance, has such admirable qualities that if he had been prepared to take greater risks he might have been able to do the big thing. As it is, the League of Nations Union is too much the symbol of acquiescence and Viscount Cecil is too much the offspring of the old families, and too much bound by their diplomatic tradition.' I mentioned that Mr. Nichols had termed the League itself no more than an 'Anglo-French Alliance', and Dr. Sheppard agreed; he said, further, he could not see how the League's failure to enforce sanctions against Japan in Manchukuo and its apparent determination to enforce them against Italy in Abyssinia could be fully explained away.

The assumption of Cabinet responsibility had brought our leading politicians to a ready acceptance of the war



system? Lloyd George had by the stress of the occasion been transformed from a fiery advocate of peace into our most successful and energetic War Minister. MacDonald, who had risked his career and even his life for pacifist ideals, has been modified through Premiership of the National Government into a cautious supporter of re-armament. I mentioned the *Challenge to Death* symposium and in particular the late Winifred Holtby's brilliant chapter called 'An Apology for Armourers'. He agreed it was terribly difficult to lay particular blame on individuals or groups, and that if the present system was to be admitted at all 'then you must give the poor fellows the material to fight each other with. Churchill is right there.'

England was, he thought, on the whole, anti-pacifist. There was the large Public School class—delightful but conditioned. 'Whenever I go into West End clubs the members tend to look askance. "There goes Sheppard," they whisper, "he's a bit of a crank; he's getting past it, you know."' I believe that we—I mean my profession—are the most to blame and have the most to answer for. We have not been doing our obvious duty. The Church continues with rare exceptions to be solidly Tory in personnel, sympathy, and policy.'

I asked him at this point whether it was his considered belief (for he had expressed it as a somewhat airy sentiment in *We Say No*) that Christianity has not been in fact practised for the better part of 1,900 years. He said it was. I said, 'I suppose, then, for instance, you regard the great Norman and the Gothic Cathedrals or the life of St. Thomas as basically feudal symbols, the manifestations of a feudal ideal?'

*Dr. Sheppard:* 'That is so; all those immense, beautiful churches, you know, are really the outcome of

continuous attempts to put aside and avoid the main challenge of Christianity. Yes, it is this Toryism and the overwhelming ignorance of the people that are holding up the progress of peace in our time.'

Dr. Sheppard had remained squatting on the tapestry chair. Now he suddenly got up and interrupted himself with, 'Wait a minute!' He returned with a copy of *The Nature of the Physical World*. 'This is what I mean,' he said, and began reading with great eagerness. The tempo was *allegro vivace* throughout and one or two of the phrases were accordingly blurred. His whole mood had changed. The quotation acted as a stimulant. Dr. Sheppard's faith is strong, but the whips and scorns are many. It is human (and attractively so) that he shall look for vindication wherever it can be found, and if Eddington can help, Eddington is certainly the man. For his language and thought are clear-cut and tingle the blood like a brisk walk on a frosty night—one does not always know where one is going, but it is grand to be moving at all.

This was the quotation: 'I am standing on the threshold about to enter a room. It is a complicated business. In the first place I must shove against an atmosphere pressing with a force of fourteen pounds on every square inch of my body. I must make sure of landing on a plank travelling at twenty miles a second round the sun—a fraction of a second\* too early or too late, the plank would be miles away. I must do this whilst hanging from a round planet, head outward into space, and with a wind of ether blowing at no one knows how many miles a second through every interstice of my body. The plank has no solidity of substance. To step on to it is like stepping on a swarm of flies. Shall I not slip through? No, if I make the venture one of the flies hits me and gives a boost up

again; I fall again and am knocked by another fly; and so on. I may hope that the net result will be that I remain about steady; but if unfortunately I should slip through the floor or be boosted too violently up to the ceiling, the occurrence would be, not a violation of the laws of Nature, but a rare coincidence. These are some of the minor difficulties. I ought really to look at the problem four-dimensionally as concerning the intersection of my world-line with that of the plank. Then again it is necessary to determine in which direction the entropy of the world is increasing in order to make sure that my passage over the threshold is an entrance, not an exit.

‘Verily, it is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for a scientific man to pass through a door. And whether the door be barn door or church door it might be wiser that he should consent to be an ordinary man and walk in rather than wait till all the difficulties in a really scientific ingress are resolved.’<sup>1</sup>

Dr. Sheppard put the book aside. ‘There it is,’ he said, ‘we all stop at the entrance and dispute the time away instead of going straight in—and ahead.’

As I prepared to leave, formal politenesses were mixed up with Dr. Sheppard’s vigorous championing of the human as against the economic man. ‘I am trying to unravel Social Credit,’ he said without enthusiasm. In the hall we were back again on moral leadership. There was the capacious intelligence of Wells; but there was somehow a reservation to be made about him—perhaps it was his voice. Shaw—‘He’d probably loathe or laugh to hear it said of him, but in my opinion he is our greatest living Christian.’

<sup>1</sup> Sir A. S. Eddington, *The Nature of the Physical World*, p. 342.

I am calling this Chapter 'Dr. Sheppard and the Sheep' because to my mind it summarizes his status, ambitions, and service within the Anglican fold. By denying himself to lead others into a way of peace, by exploiting common sense, yet making conscience his leader in the interpretation of the New Testament, he is more likely than many famous men with higher extraneous talents to bring Gennesareth to Thames. It is said that a virtue passed from General Gordon into those who had the privilege of meeting him. Dr. Sheppard embodies the same personal potentials. He is sensitive, but not handicapped with General Gordon's mysticism and almost morbid introspection.

Self-reliance, I thought, as I walked into Fleet Street, is a wholesome thing. Only visionaries and unwarranted disturbers of emotion can turn the usual little pitfalls into a big abyss. Peace will come all right out of straightforward ideals—and then an abominable awakening. I got caught in a crowd staring through the window of Sensation's Latest Hot-house. They were looking at a realistic map of Abyssinia, pinned with green and yellow flags. There were some red and blue flags which modestly made it clear just how close the fighting was to British and French possessions. The *ensemble* was The War from Day to Day. The faces in that crowd were settled and anonymous. They showed no emotion before the Press Peer's little shrine to the up-to-date Janus, his two-faced God of Publicity and National Righteousness. They were stolid fetish worshippers unaware of Wrath or Damnation, Faith or Mystery. They were all as dead as Ezekiel's exceeding great army. . . . 'And he said unto me can these bones live and I answered: Lord God thou knowest.'

‘Yes, of course,’ Mr. Cardan affirmed, ‘The life of the soldier who killed Archimedes isn’t worth the life of Archimedes. It’s the fundamental fallacy of democracy and humanitarian, Christianity to suppose that it is. Though, of course,’ Mr. Cardan added pensively, ‘one has no justifying reason for saying so, but only one’s instinctive taste. For the soldier, after all, may have been a good husband and father, may have spent the non-professional, unsoldierly portions of his life in turning the left cheek and making two blades of grass grow where only one grew before. If, like Tolstoy, your tastes run to good fatherhood, left cheeks and agriculture, then you’ll say that the life of the soldier is worth just as much as the life of Archimedes—much more, indeed; for Archimedes was a mere geometrician, who occupied himself with lines and angles, curves and surfaces, instead of with good and evil, husbandry and religion. But if, on the contrary, one’s tastes are of a more intellectual cast, then one will think as I think—that the life of Archimedes is worth the lives of several billion of even the most amiable soldiers. But—as for saying which point of view is right——’ Mr. Cardan shrugged his shoulders. ‘Partner, I leave it to you!’

ALDOUS HUXLEY: *Those Barren Leaves*

THE Marquis de Sade was condemned to a long term of imprisonment for having distributed aphrodisiac candies to a few prostitutes in Marseilles. But Nationalists who devise means for arousing in millions the disgraceful passions of hatred, envy and vanity are hailed as the saviours of their country.

ALDOUS HUXLEY: *Beyond the Mexique Bay*

## CHAPTER XI

### PEACE PSYCHOLOGY

#### MR. ALDOUS HUXLEY'S METHOD

*I. Mr. Huxley's inheritance—His approach to peace—An undergraduate indiscretion—T. S. Eliot for Prologue—Two letters*

*II St. James's Park—Pacifism defined—Passive resistance—Quakers—Strikes—Citation from Gregg—Disarmament—Daggers for Swords—Sanctions—Tribal Duties—Power and Degradation—Abstractions—Speech quoted—Decline of Humanism—Church as weather-vane.*

*III The Athenaeum—The next war—Brave New World—Conclusion—All-round living.*

#### I

A FAMILY tradition is usually confined to a Christian name or facial resemblance. Among the Huxleys it has become identified with a rare alliance of intellectual virtues. Mr. Aldous Huxley's inheritance can be summarized as a method of criticism which binds the science of life to the art of living, which is articulate but never garrulous, which is so alive to sham that it startles us who either lack the facts or if having the facts the sense of values that chooses between them. The idiom is understatement, emotional reserve, though there is a deep and subtle opposition to that Reign of Atrophy which we have come to identify with donnish. It came out quite casually during our talk when he said he thought a Don's career was dangerous because it caused so many intelligent men to 'petrify and petrify'.

Here is a method of thinking and idiom enclosing perhaps the only reliable peace offering among all the drugs and quackeries that have sprung up to provide instant relief from our social *malaise*. Here is a balance

between the exploitation of knowledge and servitude before it, between analysis and creative flair, contemplation and action. It is not easily attained but, Mr. Wells excepted, Mr. Aldous Huxley probably gives it a fuller literary value than any other contemporary British writer. Accordingly, if I were asked by some one wanting to cleanse his intellectual system or make an emotional escape from the gentle regurgitation of prunes: 'What do you advise me to read for a fundamental appreciation of the Peace and War problem?' I would reply: 'The writings of Aldous Huxley and naturally the direct references—his wireless talk, *The Causes of War*,<sup>1</sup> or his study of nationalism in the philosophic travel book, *Beyond the Mexique Bay*. You won't find the Law and the Prophets here, but no law and no prophet should demand your allegiance to any faith, national or international, sanctioning or whipping boy, that cannot with a similar persistency offer definitions as valid and analogies as effective.

I piously believed that there was a sincere intellectual band among my generation which was resolutely upholding his attitude of mind. I was accordingly somewhat shattered to read in a Cambridge magazine an undergraduate's reproof: 'Surely we see now that Aldous Huxley is nothing more than a second-rate Oscar Wilde and to attribute him permanence is a trifle naïve.' So much for modesty and the cheek of innocence.

As a prologue I had attended a lunch-time sermon delivered by T. S. Eliot on the urgent Peace and War theme, 'The Christian and the Modern State', and had left the church rather depressed, with no doubts removed. It was all very far above the ugliness of the world's facts. Communism was carefully distinguished from its Soviets, and Fascism from its Mussolinis, and while

<sup>1</sup> The talks were published (George Allen & Unwin).

'we Christians' had our status largely assumed for us, we were told that as Christians our preoccupations with social philosophies were basically secondary and derivative. He implied asceticism without entering a monastery and ritualism without going to Rome, and I felt that though his thought was lofty his ideas were anaemic.

My conversation with Mr. Huxley took the form of a walk three times round St. James's Park on a dank November afternoon with an epilogue of a small tea at the Athenaeum. Our correspondence had suggested the lines it might take.

I had written originally: 'It is apparent that international law is a bundle of dry bones unless national sovereignty is renounced. Does the sovereignty issue which was bandied about in the seventeenth century to cover a multitude of cravings within the State, exercise the same appeal when the aim is a world order far wider than that dreamt of either by Empire or Papacy? People like Sir John Fisher Williams talk in terms of legalistic formulae, and seem to be completely unaware of the incoherent political theories to which the masses react.

'I would like also to ask you about the analogy between State and Individual. It is exploited so frequently and loosely that only the clearest thinking and most rational statement will extricate it from fallacy. Also it would be interesting to hear just how long you think the psychological urge to hatred and sadistic practices can withstand things like dry-land drowning. If religious taboos are the outcome of social necessity what are the chances of tabooing modern war?'

He had replied: 'I will do my best to answer your questions, though they seem to me very hard to answer. I am coming now to think that the only practical way of dealing with the problem of war is the organization of



what Gregg in his recent book on the subject calls Non-Violent Coercion—the method of Gandhi and so many others. 'To be effective such an organization would have to be as efficient in its way as the organization and discipline of an Army.'

## II

On our arrival in the Park, he opened the attack with: 'We must first of all get rid of the word Pacifism. It at once implies that our movement is passive, which, of course, is just what it is not.' There must, he felt, be some more specific and active organization which can gather together in peace time those who are taking out the full peace ticket but who are now separated and unaware of each other's existence. He was a great admirer of Dr. Sheppard and his work, but did not find his Peace Pledge sufficiently cohesive. It was essential to realize on what psychological principles this action could be based.

The lesson of anthropology is that primitive peoples and animals always react favourably to an unarmed man who confronts them without showing fear, or having it in his heart. Among the remains of the Indus Civilization (contemporary with Sumer and early Egypt) no weapons have been found, and it is apparent that their cities were built without walls. It is, further, not a natural state for animals to be at war with each other. Examples from history vindicated the potency of passive resistance. He cited the Hungarians in the 'sixties. The triumph of primitive Christianity over the Roman Imperial system was the supreme precedent. The stubborn survival of Quakerism for more than two hundred and seventy years was significant.

'They only number about nineteen thousand,' he said, 'of which at the most nine thousand can be called effective members, and of which the majority acts rather as a dead-weight. It should be noted further that they definitely do not encourage proselytism but, rather, take up the attitude: "Are you sure you want to join us? Have you weighed up all the difficulties?"'

He felt there was a danger that the movement might be decaying. If this was so it was chiefly through a failure to understand psychological requirements. They were accustomed to hold meetings of three hundred at a time. This was far too great a number to bring about any results comparable to those of the original Christian *ἐκκλησία*. Christ was wise in keeping the number of his disciples down to twelve.

The General Strike came very near to reaching its objective simply because the strikers did not make any attempt to use violence. During strikes it often happens that the owners send *agents-provocateurs* among the workers. For until the workers can be persuaded to express their grievances by the accepted method of force, the owners have no weapons, psychological or otherwise, with which to combat them.

I noted with interest the way Mr. Huxley made this point; his voice is naturally deep, but each sentence is marked by a simultaneous crescendo and raising of pitch. This gives an impression of petulance, but it is wholly false, for in this case he showed no semblance of anger against the owners for their behaviour. He never weakens his argument with moral indignation.

He then more or less cited Gregg's argument:

'Of course, if you cower, your opponent is encouraged to strike at you again, and if you hit back the struggle is at once intensified, but if you discipline yourself into

indifference, it is psychologically impossible for your opponent to keep up his onslaught. Not even the most hardened and highly trained Guards regiment could withstand you for long. Any one who challenges your realism with: "What would you do if a German came over and tried to rape your sister?" deserves the retort commonly made: "Well, I would not go abroad and murder his uncle."

Mr. Huxley reminded me that Litvinoff was right when he defended the Soviet plan for complete disarmament; for he pointed out that his programme was realistic compared with the seemingly modest proposals of the other governments which, as far as effects and results showed, had proved entirely Utopian.

I asked him whether this unilateral disarmament lead should come from England. He felt that we were better fitted to take it than any other country at the present. France was still paralysed by dread of Germany. The smaller Powers were simply lacking in status. The circle was vicious and the beginning had got to be made. Further, if the Government realized that large numbers of the people—not merely a few cranks or self-indulgent intellectuals—were steadfast in their pacifism it would be bound to react to their influence. He suggested that there might be a formidable leaven even within the Civil Service.

"There is no hope for the disarmament method we have been consistently adopting, the method that says, as a special dispensation let us substitute daggers for swords." He showed no enthusiasm for Sanctions; though admitting the desirability of an international legal system to protect us from destruction, he felt there was a grave likelihood that we would destroy ourselves in bringing it about. The Sanctionist was illogical for stable Peace never has or can come out of Force. The

only certain effect of Sanctions was that they would exacerbate Mussolini's furious egotism and drive him into Samson's state of mind: 'If I die then let all die with me.'

There was a further menacing aspect of continental nationalism. Within the Roman Imperial system Augustus assumed the functions of a centralizing and uniting Godhead, but now the peoples were disintegrating, branching out into the worship of separate tribal deities. The abiding lesson of antiquity for us was that Power means Degradation. Suetonius' *Lives* was still the best commentary on Power and showed most clearly how the influence of *suprema potestas* could transform twelve men of quite normal attributes into monsters of vice.

It must be admitted that the improvements within government are very difficult to explain, but they are nevertheless observable. There was, for instance, a sudden cessation of corruption in English local and municipal government after 1835. This was partly due to legal reform, but the deeper motive was probably some psychological adjustment.

He strongly emphasized all through the dangers of academic definitions. On the one hand, there were Sir Norman Angell's arguments, but neither the diplomatic nor economic explanations of war do justice to the facts. War is not primarily or solely the outcome of economic rivalries, but is a complex of dynastic, psychological, and a whole host of other motives. He agreed, too, that the plea that war is an economic folly does not offer a cause on which popular aspirations for peace can be built.

'The fact may seem curious, but it is none the less true, that the warlike passions burn most fiercely in minds which think about problems of peace and war in terms of generalizations and abstractions. To bring oneself to

kill individual human beings is not easy; but when those human beings are thought of merely as members of a class which has previously been defined as evil, then killing becomes a simple matter. Brown, Jones, and Robinson must not be thought of as Brown, Jones, and Robinson, but as heretics, enemies of God, gentiles, non-Aryans, niggers, barbarians, Huns, fascists, communists, capitalists, whichever the case may be. When they have been called such names and assimilated to the accursed class to which these names apply, Brown, Jones, and Robinson cease to be regarded as human beings and become vermin or devils whom one is justified in exterminating in the most painful way possible. All war propaganda consists in the last resort, in substituting diabolical abstractions for human beings. Similarly, those who defend war have invented a pleasant-sounding vocabulary of abstractions in which to describe the process of mass murder. Consider the phrase which was on everybody's lips in 1917—the phrase “war of attrition”. Nothing could be more genteel, less calculated to shock the sensibilities. For what is “attrition”? A mere process of rubbing. The word suggests the delicate polishing of a telescope lens. There is no hint of individuals suffering pain, going mad, being killed. All writings on the ‘art of war’ are a tissue of such abstract or elegantly figurative phrases. (Coleridge called them “Our dainty terms for fratricide”.) It is a most salutary exercise to go through such treatises translating each phrase as it occurs into other phrases expressing the individual reality of the situation under discussion. In general, no pacifist can permit himself to think in terms of abstractions. The abstractions in terms of which strategists describe war are meant to conceal the fact that war is a process of large-scale murder. The abstractions

in terms of which propagandists describe the enemy are meant to conceal the fact that the hostile nation consists of individual men and women, having the same potentialities for good and evil as ourselves. Similarly, abstractions such as "the State" and "the Nation" should constantly be re-translated into terms descriptive of concrete individual reality. If this is not done, State and Nation may easily come to be regarded as self-subsisting, divine entities which it is our duty to worship.<sup>1</sup>

Without strictly denying the validity of a cyclic theory of history he derived little satisfaction from my reference to Toynbee's psychological conception of contemporary nationalism as the last prostration of the peoples before the idol they were about to destroy, and dismissed it, along with 'Spengler's fantastic fatalism'. As far as social theories to explain or develop conduct were concerned he pointed to the sinister course the seventeenth and eighteenth century revolt against Christianity had taken. It began as a challenge to a faith that had stood only for the vague theory of man's universal brotherhood and that was in fact supplying the banners of national discord. Humanism began as man for man's sake. There was a period of tolerance even in warfare, but then followed a surprising religious revival. Humanism taking over some of the old Faith became diverted into the religion of nationalism on the one hand and 'a much less powerful creed' of socialism on the other.

<sup>1</sup> The above is a remarkable passage from the speech he delivered on 'Pacifism and Philosophy' at the Friends' House a week after our talk. I quote it in full; it is closely linked up with what he said to me; quite apart from its relevance here it is an excellent example of his penetration and detachment. The address was published together with one by Mr. Gerald Heard on 'The Significance of the New Pacifism' and can be obtained on application to the Friends' House price 2d. It is probably no exaggeration to claim that this small pamphlet is a landmark in the definition and development of Pacifist Theory.

'Transcendental deities are out of the question. Finding themselves unable to believe in anything that they cannot see, men bow down to mundane gods. Superstition becomes positivistic. A new idolatry appears. Instead of God, men adore the Nation, the State, the Class, the Leader. All history takes an undulatory course. Religion has always had its ups and downs.'<sup>1</sup>

Still, the Church was in many ways a good weather-vane of these veering motives. In 1912 there was widespread complacency, no real questioning the place national armies and navies have in the Order of God. Now there is a great change and a most notable sense of uneasiness. He didn't go so far as to suggest that the Churches would supply leadership to-day, though he felt it would be in the interest of all of them to take an extreme line for peace. What is likely to happen instead is that if pacifist opinions are generally accepted and acted on then the Papacy, for instance, will say: 'This is what our teaching has always implied, and if it had not been for the Protestants——'

### III

We left St. James's Park to have tea at the Athenaeum. I had never been inside that literary Holy of Holies before. My first impression was somewhat sinister, as of Piranesi's Dream Prison where there is disquietingly both more and less than first meets the eye. Piranesi's world was of cobwebs, but here there was luxury, real and massive even if austere. We settled ourselves half-way up the huge staircase.

Mr. Huxley made much of the theme that it was virtually impossible for the imagination to grasp what the

<sup>1</sup> See *Pacifism and Philosophy*, p. 15

next war would mean. What would happen if the enemy—as it assuredly would—bombed Whitehall and in the bombardment succeeded—as was likely—in burning all the key documents? Our governmental and our military system was so centralized that there would at once be complete chaos. No one in authority would be able to say at a given moment where, for example, the Suffolk Regiment was, its geographical relation to other regiments or the plans for its future movements, all those and similar details would have been destroyed. The Nation would be, in fact, like a man without a memory. The prospects were terrifying—the conception of eight million people trying to flee from London, the effect of explosion—London streets were honeycombed with wires and pipes. The potentialities of the havoc were brought home to us a few years ago when there were a number of explosions through the bursting of old and defective gas pipes. There would be unparalleled outbreaks of disease, the unknown horror of gas—the gas that irritated the skin, and that forced you to take off the mask that protected you from other gases. It was inconceivable that people could be talking of an alternative to pacifism. I referred to Reparations and to Tardieu's comment on Keynes' suggestion that two thousand millions was probably an excessive estimate. M. Tardieu had said: 'The Pro-German scribe from Cambridge oversteps the limits of permissible tomfoolery and is only making fun of Germany's victims.' In those reparation discussions, he said, is probably the supreme example of what war can do to seemingly sensible men.

Keeping in mind social systems that forced these murderous thoughts on us and that turned them from idle nightmares into probable duties, I brought up the question of *Brave New World*, and asked him whether his



ultimate sympathies were with the savage's aspirations or with the ideal of conditioned stability: 'With neither, but I believe some mean between the two is both desirable and possible and must be our objective.'

However, the temptation to retire into a shell must be set aside. At one moment he suggested that our efforts might have to be limited to the training of an intellectual aristocracy, and at another he pointed to the lines this training should take. The intellectuals within the Labour Party are in some ways to blame for the present menacing situation in their determination to keep all the power to themselves. They must be content to wield a controlled influence behind the scenes or bear some constitutional resemblance to the British Monarchy.

Our talk came to an abrupt end. I turned left into Pall Mall, while Mr. Huxley with his long, spare figure and reticent walk, went straight on towards Piccadilly. I remembered his superb sombrero, white socks, the sandalwood aroma in his flat—a fine personal defiance of the levelling influence of London's winter fog.

Our conversation had not conformed to the menu set out in my letter which promised roughly a three-course meal. The outcome was rather an hors-d'œuvre consideration of the subject, with predominating flavour a social philosophy summed up as: 'The problem for me is to transform a detached intellectual cynicism into a way of harmonious all-round living.'<sup>1</sup> Mr. Huxley's method of thinking, in fact, does not blind him to its limitations in as far as it can bring any immediate remedy to War. He has written in *Music at Night*: 'From pure sensation to the intuition of beauty, from pleasure and pain to the mystical ecstasy of death—all the things that are fundamental, all

<sup>1</sup> Bluntschli in Bernard Shaw's *Arms and the Man*. The phrase was originally applied to Mr. Huxley's work by A. J. J. Ratcliff in *Prose of our Time*.

the things that to the human spirit are most profoundly significant can only be experienced, not expressed. The rest is always and everywhere silence!

Aldous Huxley is the disciple of a way of life that seeks peace and finds it in the acceptance of scientific technique controlled by the modern equivalent of Renaissance mind. He rejects a degraded humanism: 'Suffice it to say that so far as Pacifism is concerned, humanism has not in the long run shown itself propitious. Equally unpropitious is any kind of superhumanism that lends itself to exclusiveness and division. There is left belief in a spiritual reality to which all men have access and in which they are united.'<sup>1</sup>

He rejects excess, Baudelaire's satanism, or Pascal's asceticism, but has learnt the lesson of Spinoza's worm, of the limiting factor. His is a doctrine of systematic and sane life worship whereby the mind and the body may be satisfied and harmony attained through moderation. It is as old as Aristotle, but no sounder substitute has been offered to humanity. 'Meanwhile,' wrote Freud to Einstein, 'we may rest on the assurance that whatever makes for cultural development is working also against war.'

<sup>1</sup> *Philosophy and Pacifism*, p. 16

WE should not wish to have everything given and no opportunity of struggle and victory. In other words, if the purpose or part of the purpose, of the created order is the development of the personalities and the achievement by them, of their own full stature through the pursuit of goodness, truth, and beauty, then a world in its general structure such as ours is a requisite condition.

DR. MATTHEWS:

*The Idea of God (in The Outline of Modern Knowledge)*

I have faith such end shall be:  
From the first, Power was—I knew.  
Life has made clear to me  
That, strive but for closer view,  
Love were as plain to see.

When see? When there dawns a day  
If not on the homely earth,  
Then yonder, worlds away,  
Where the strange and new have birth,  
And power comes full in play.

BROWNING: *Asolando*

## CHAPTER XII

### DARKNESS AND THE DEAN

#### DR. MATTHEWS ANSWERS A QUESTIONNAIRE

*I. Intellectual Archbishopric—Delphic oracle—Outspoken Essays—Sentiment—Importance of Personality.*

*II. The Talk—Pacifism and Logic—Gangsters—Law the instrument of Justice—William James—Categorical imperative—Newman's Apologia—Article 37—Absolutism—Reformation—Personal Duty—Passive Resistance—Liquidation of Communities—Christian Tests—Spiritual tyranny—Slave breeding—Nations and Individuals, Analogy considered.*

*III. Conclusions—Cult of Frightfulness—Pacifist cul-de-sac—Role of psychology—Youth and the Church—Perspective.*

#### I

‘**Q**UIET, calm deliberation disentangles every knot’, but atmosphere as well as temperament is wanted. That is why there is so much frustration, why we cut our knots and dye our shirts, why, too, it is so difficult to talk pacifism by appointment; but I was under good auspices for this chapter.

Of all those whom I have interviewed it is only Dr. Matthews whom I have been privileged to know well for a considerable time beforehand; and of all houses I have been in, the Deanery is pre-eminently peaceful, soothing the mind and comforting the eye.

The Deanery has so persistently produced the Church of England's most trenchant critique upon world affairs as to merit promotion to its intellectual Archbishopric. Dr. Inge did much to bring the Oracle from Delphi to Ludgate Hill, and thus Dr. Matthews succeeded to a tradition which might almost be called ambiguous. The Deanery never degenerated, as several of the Church's

more stately homes seemed to do, into anything resembling a recruiting centre, but there was no special enthusiasm for the more advanced pacifist elements within the Church or the more anarchic interpretations of the Gospels.

Dr. Inge's position is not easy to define or to appreciate. As Charles Masterman said, 'he lived a piece of intellect entirely surrounded by money-makers. Every morning the people sweep in with incredible numbers and ardour for gain, and every evening they depart, leaving the world to darkness and the Dean.'

His *Patriotism* (1915) is full to the maximum of extraneous learning, but somehow is not primarily Christian apologia. It overturns idols but does not seem to replace them with a shrine. There is, too, that same streak of sentiment in much of his writing on war which he so forcibly deplors in popular definitions of Democracy. 'He who loves not his home and country which he has seen, how shall he love humanity in general which he has not seen?'<sup>1</sup> Again, after referring to the serenity with which the 'average man' faced death during the war, he suggested it would be incomprehensible 'if he did not know in his heart of hearts that it does not matter much. . . . Perhaps he only says to himself: "Who dies if England lives?" But the England that lives is his own larger self, the life that is more his own life than the beating of his heart, which a bullet may still for ever. And if the exaltation of noble patriotism "can abolish death, and bring life and immortality to light" for almost any unthinking lad from our factories and hedgerows, should not religion be able to do as much for us all?'<sup>2</sup> This almost masochistic idealism still helps, like Castille, to make men and to waste them.<sup>3</sup> Dr. Inge, however,

<sup>1</sup> *Outspoken Essays*, First Series, p. 58.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid*, pp. 280-1.

<sup>3</sup> See *Outspoken Essays*, First Series, p. 42—citation from Patriotism Essay.

always stops short of encouraging prostration before anything. The tone is conservative and the comfort cold, for as he pointed out recently on the wireless, 'there is nothing in the New Testament to lead us to expect an inconvenient crowd at the narrow gate'.

Dr. Matthews has not identified himself quite so closely as his predecessor with Peace and War controversy, but the blatant discords of arguments signifying noise are no doubt equally repellent to him. Dr. Matthews is a Liberal in the full sense of the term, standing for Free Trade both in commerce and in ideas. In addition to his well-known faculty for imparting complex knowledge clearly and directly, he has the overwhelming gift of Christian tolerance, and by that is meant not mere receptivity, but generous and benign principles. As with Dr. Sheppard his own personality is an important contribution to peace. Salvation from war is not in our stars, but in ourselves, and the characteristics of our prominent men are more than ever guiding influences. Scientific advance during the last twenty years has given our imitative cravings scope which has no precedent in history. We may, as Mr. R. C. Sherriff has said of us, be becoming a nation of lookers-on and listeners-in, but we are learning at the same time the rules of follow our leaders, and the new Dean will probably be widely appreciated for a very deep humility and very valuable common sense.

After lunch we retreated into his large study, traditional with bookshelves for walls. There is often a background of church music, for the Cathedral choir practises near by. Sounds that 'are able both to move and to moderate all affections' and refresh the spirit now as in Hooker's time.

Our talk was interrupted at odd intervals by a telephone which would ring just long enough to get the Dean out of his chair and as far as the window, when it would stop,

offering no sign of life the other end; of sorrow that he had been troubled.

## II

At Dr. Matthews' request I warned him by post of the questions I wanted to ask. Their purpose was to find out not only his personal approach, but also to get some estimate of what may justifiably be called the majority view within the Church, and, in addition, to give more prominence to its philosophical and logical background. For this task there is probably no more authoritative interpreter than the Dean.

*What do you feel is the main logical difficulty in the way of the extreme Pacifist position, and what further objections have you to it?*

'Force is always wrong. If so, it applies to internal as well as external policy and we must find what principle there is that can rule out Force in society. This brings us up against the idea of police, yet in the present state of human development to abolish police is simply to deliver society over to gangsters. It is, I suppose, just possible that if you resolutely refuse to do anything but try and persuade the gangsters, you might convert them, but I doubt very much whether any one with small children under his protection would feel justified in taking the risk.'

Dr. Matthews claimed that there was a real analogy between the development of a civilized society within the State and that of an international society. In both cases you pass through a time in social development when the employment of Force is necessarily haphazard, when the mere strong man gets command. This is only rationalized when Force becomes the instrument of Law, and Law the instrument of Justice. He believed that the way to

world peace was the same as the way to social peace. 'However, from the psychological point of view those who say that war has good effects on character are not wholly foolish. The facing of danger, loyalty, the disciplining of masses of human beings has a value and a thrill which are not wholly bad.

'Quite frankly it is much more exhilarating to see a Guards Regiment on the march than a band of demonstrators parading on behalf of Universal Peace.' He asked whether I had read William James's essay on 'Psychological Substitutes for War'. He felt it was essential to discover and foster them. Young men should be enlisted on difficult and dangerous tasks.

'Our war predicament to-day is a reflection of the conflict that is going on in people's minds, and our civilization is a reflection of the thoughts of the peoples themselves. Our attention is distracted between purely self-regarding and altruistic aims, and the problem is not apparently resolved in our lives.'

Dr. Matthews then mentioned an underlying weakness in pacifist morality. It meant if taken to its logical conclusion picking out one motive as absolutely good. Where you have that kind of ethic you are saying, this thing is good irrespective of any consequence. It is to be found in Kant and his *Categorical Imperative*, where he lays down that the consequences of an act have nothing whatever to do with the moral value of the act. He gave an example, and quoted Cardinal Newman's famous challenge in the *Apologia*: 'Better that the whole world should perish in agony than that the soul of a single human being should commit a mortal sin', to show the extravagant and morbid lengths to which this kind of argument might be stretched. There were thus two approaches to pacifism which it was necessary to distinguish clearly.



1. That all violence is wrong, the view being based upon direct intuition.

2. That in the long run the pacifist attitude brings the best results.

*Article 37. 'It is lawful for Christian men at the commandment of the magistrate to wear weapons and serve in wars.' What is the correct interpretation of this? For instance, is the Church enabled by it to limit its support only to military action, enforcing the commands of the League and vindicating international law?*

'By "it is lawful" is not meant "it is obligatory". The article does not condemn outright the conscientious objector.' He referred to the historical background of the Thirty-Nine Articles and how the situation would change if there was anything in existence which could be called an international government. Obviously it would, on the same principle, be lawful to go to war in defence of international government. However, if the world is governed in accordance with Christ, war disappears: government disappears: it is 'anarchy'—in the sense that government is carried on within the conscience and mind of each individual citizen—a government from within, then, and nothing needed but persuasion.

These are the laws of the Kingdom of God and we as Christians are to envisage a State where these kind of things have come to be.

The State as we know it is a temporary thing, and has nothing about it of eternal value, but so far as it goes it does enshrine certain spiritual values, even though they could no doubt be enshrined more easily under some other system.

*On what Christian principle does the English Church give sanctity to war in national self-defence—war, which according to military experts, must involve measures of*

*counter-attack? Is a National Church in a position to judge the relative merits of European Governments?*

‘Once you begin to think of the English Church as a separate entity you are immediately involved in grave difficulties. The idea is all wrong. Admittedly the Churches have tended to become exclusively national, but the ideal of the Church is to be a super-national organization. Until we return to that conception, which seems to many impracticable but is in fact perfectly feasible, we shall continue to be in the terrible situation in which we find ourselves now. That is why efforts of Christian reunion and the rebuilding of a genuine Catholic Church are an integral part of the problem of Peace.

‘The Reformation, which was in my opinion a necessary historical event, had the appalling consequences of weakening and almost destroying the one international spiritual influence which existed in the world. The unfortunate thing now is that the Roman Church, which claims to be international, is apparently one of the greatest obstacles to reunion. On the whole, in the present circumstances the duty remains for the leaders of the Church to make up their minds as best they can as to the justice of the cause.

‘For my own part I agreed that it was our duty to resist the German onslaught in 1914, but it was an appalling moral problem. It is a terrible memory, too, that most of the young men who went, did so not out of any swagger, and were fighting for what they sincerely felt to be justice.’ He agreed that the Church should insist more vigorously upon everybody’s case being fairly heard.

Protests should be made against garbled and one-sided news. He felt that neither the Communists nor the Nazis were fairly presented to the British public.

*Force breeds Force. Communists versus Nazis. Mr.*

*Aldous Huxley believes in the psychological potency or passive resistance, but points out that it requires greater discipline than is to be found in national armies. Is passive resistance fundamentally Christian conduct? Could the Church act as the disciplinary agent?\**

'I admit at once that the Christian ought to aim at bringing into existence a state of society in which nothing more than a passive resistance to wrong would be required. But I do not feel that the right attitude now is to assume that such a state of society exists. The ideals of the Sermon on the Mount are the laws of the Kingdom of God, and I accept Professor Whitehead's view that these ideals are the standard by which progress should be judged, and are themselves the chief cause of progress. The Christian should aim at transforming human society according to the pattern of the Kingdom of God, but he has to recognize that this aim has sometimes to be fulfilled by active resistance to forces which would destroy the possibility of progress.

'This does not mean that we should do evil that good may come, but that in the present condition of human civilization the best possible good may be from an absolute point of view an evil, i.e. what would be evil in a perfect society.'

A. C. J.: 'Is it not true that the early Christians supplied a precedent for us to-day in passive resistance to military service?'

Dr. Matthews: 'No. The analogy is false. Primitive Christianity meant the rise of a sect which was not considered lawful by an international government, and what the Christians chiefly objected to in the Roman Army was paying respects to pagan deities. Though early Christianity had enormous social consequences, it was not in the first place a social movement.'

I tried to explain the arguments Mr. Huxley put forward to me, but he felt that unless the movement is properly international not much is going to come of passive resistance. He did not at this moment fancy Mr. Huxley's chances of being able to proclaim it in the face of an invader, and of surviving to see the result.

He agreed that the miseries of those whose minds are not made up are terrible to contemplate, but when you think that the Bolsheviks liquidated whole classes of people who did not in their estimate properly belong to the new social order there is no very good reason why a ruthless conqueror should not liquidate passive resisters.

Dr. Matthews stressed this somewhat overwhelming example, and it must be admitted that if myriads of Russians were destroyed for the offence of being what they were and doing nothing about it, passive resisters with a laborious technique of exasperation have not a great deal to hope for in the way of forbearance. 'I don't see how it works,' he said.

He went further: 'There is a right and a justifiable use of Force to meet injustice. If you deny that you are denying the right of insurrection against tyranny. I am sorry to see that view so widespread in a world that is so full of tyrannies at the moment.'

*Are there any particular tests a Christian should apply before engaging in war? Do you think that the huge military developments during the last hundred years or so have rendered the Christian theory of war inadequate? Beales says of Augustine's theory: 'In certain conditions war is just; though the conditions prescribed are strict enough to condemn every war that has ever been fought.'*

'I don't think there has ever been one particular Christian theory of war. To begin with, war seems to have been regarded as one of the consequences of Original

Sin, and some ancient theologians went so far as calling the State a part of man's fallen condition. If there has been an underlying principle of action it has been roughly that all war is evil, but that some wars are better than the alternative evil.

'For some things are worse than war. It is worse, for instance, if the whole nation is reduced to slavery, and if all freedom of thought is extinguished. If no research or discussion is allowed except on prescribed lines, if it is, in fact, a really efficient spiritual tyranny. It would be worse than war if there was a state of society where one dominant clique or caste decided what kind of people should be bred.

'Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World* is worse than any war. There is nothing more horrible than the idea of a biologically dominant race maintaining its control by sterilization. We must admit that the possibilities of modern slavery are enormous and that we can breed slave mentalities on an unprecedented scale. In the long run Freedom alone is worth fighting for.'

*How far is the analogy drawn between individuals and nations a false one?*

'This is a very difficult question. There is obviously a partial analogy because a nation undertakes responsibility *vis-à-vis* other nations, and there is consequently such a thing as international morality; and a nation may be in a sense guilty of ill-faith and treachery. On the other hand, a nation cannot be regarded as an individual in the proper sense of the word, because though we may speak of a national mind, it never has that integration which characterizes the mind of a sane adult. A nation, moreover, should have as its purpose the highest possible development of the personalities of its citizens. The citizens do not exist for it, as the Nazis vainly talk, but it exists for them. In

my view national states are means not ends. The same is true of the ideal of an international or world state. It might be a most appalling tyranny, and far worse than even our present muddle. I should hate to be governed by Mr. H. G. Wells's airmen. If there could be a world state inspired by the ideals of freedom, that is, of promoting the development of human personality to its highest possible flowering—that would be, in my opinion, a solution to our problems; and I cannot doubt that ultimately the human race will have sufficient wisdom to set up such a state. I do not see, however, how this can be achieved if all people of goodwill give notice in advance that they will offer no resistance to any tyranny or oppression.'

### III

I felt the whole time that Dr. Matthews would like to be able to believe in passive resistance. What held him back and must give us pause was, that it did not appear to him as a grain of mustard-seed belief. If it comes out into the open and begins as a minority it will be destroyed as one. Accordingly it must be international and reciprocal, never national and solitary; because what we may perhaps call the cult of frightfulness is at this moment a world-wide factor. Never before has paranoia been so disciplined, so uniform, and so methodical, so ruthlessly exploited to achieve the purposes of paranoia.

The secrets of psychology are not only making a world safe for sheep to graze in, they are strengthening the lions in the technique of slaughter. Psychology can both dissolve and intensify Force. However, quite apart from to-day's popular ignorance and expert dissensions, the chief residue of hope for us is that as knowledge of psychology advances, so may its potentialities retreat,

that it may tend to be revealed to us more, as graphs and charts of mental facts and less as levers to manipulate the minds of men.

The Dean was sketching another significant line of thought when he implied a warning against the logical cul-de-sac of Pacifism. The trouble is it does not look like a cul-de-sac until the very end of the road has been reached; then we are too tired to turn back and tend to carry on in the fantasy of pride and prejudice.

The pacifist's first concern is a regard for human life. There is purpose in that, but—it can be argued—to make that regard the only and the absolute concern is to take that purpose away. To stand adamantly on a personal refusal in every case to kill, opens up the absurd and indeed the immoral possibility of being concerned indirectly in the deaths of many. Absolute pacifism does not seek a remedy for war, but ignores it; is not reform, but mysticism. However, by rejecting this extreme position we are not straightway caught in a spiral of murder, or any nexus of obligations which end by making us fall in step with the latest thing in drill-sergeants. To abandon this theoretically untenable position, and to come down from the precarious rigours of intellectual pole-squatting, is to make pacifism at once a social movement, a means liable to adjustment and potentially formidable to an end at all costs to be won.

Countless men and women of my generation who on the official records are sons and daughters of the Church, test their faith by an almost uninterrupted absence from its services, and by desultory and bitter criticisms of its incoherence before the peace problem. Indeed, for the majority of us it is probably more urgent that the Peace should be kept than that the Faith should be saved, and we are active Christians only in so far as our objection to

war needs conscientious reinforcement. Unfortunately this kind of opinion can neither be defended nor shelved. It cannot be defended because it is heresy, and in the way of heresies not a particularly honest one. Further, it smells of superstition; this idea of an Anglican *Deus ex machina* for life's major problems, and degenerates into contempt when it is merged in the hope that the Almighty will, like Cincinnatus, come out of his retirement and go back to it again immediately the Peace job has been done. Some want a sign and will believe. But that is both blackmail and blindness.

On the other hand, our opinions cannot be shelved unless the Church is prepared to set us at naught, and be further relegated by us. There is evidence of a new anxiety, but the old errors seem to persist. It is not enough for the Church to interpret public opinion on the Government's behalf, and to pass pious resolutions on political policy some weeks after the Government has taken its irrevocable decision. It is as much spiritual bankruptcy to-day when the Church ponders over the ethics of the Hoare-Laval plan, as it was in 1900 when Canon Armitage Robinson commented upon the campaign against the Boers as 'the people making war because it feels it must unless it would be untrue to itself'.

Dr. Matthews' approach undermines these perversions; for while relating international with social peace, he demands always spiritual perspective. He subordinates the problem of war and transforms political action by setting a general standard from which can be developed a full Christian life.



*John:* What do you know of war? How did you see it, sitting at home here? Could any of the truth of it possibly have filtered through to your minds? How? By what channels? The newspapers perhaps, the edited drama of cautious war correspondents, photographs of devastated areas, casualty lists, the things you were told by men on leave, men who spared you out of courtesy to your ignorance, who parried your idiotic questions because they were tired and wanted to rest a little. They said it was 'All right', 'Not so bad'—that it would soon be over and that you weren't to worry. And they went back—some of them almost gladly, because they loved you and were relieved to know how little you knew, others, less sentimental, were glad for different reasons. There's a quality in war that doesn't quite fit in with your gaudy labels, 'God and Country!' and all the rest of the cant you manufactured. There's a quality that you could never know, never remotely imagine, beyond your easy patriotism and your prayers. Beyond even what love you have. Something intangible and desolately beautiful because it is based upon the deepest tragedy of all, disillusion beyond hope. Strangely enough, your whole religion is founded on that same tragedy, though in comparison with the war, the crucifixion becomes microscopic in importance. Christ was one man, the war was millions.

*Lady Stagg-Mortimer:* You're a very interesting young man. You must come to lunch. Can you manage next Tuesday, or if not you might dine on the 25th. Quite a small party. Don't forget.

NOEL COWARD: *Post Mortem*

## CHAPTER XIII

### CULT OF CAVALCADE

#### INTERVIEW WITH MR. NOEL COWARD

*I. Mr. Coward and We War Babies—Sex and the Blues—Laughter and Tears—Patriotism—The Power of 'Cavalcade'—Music in Men's Lives—Everyman's Saga—'Post Mortem' Least Resistance*

*II. Stage Atmosphere—The Interview—Mad Dogs and Englishmen*

#### I

MR. COWARD has already joined the Order of Accepted Things. He has become an integral part of public life. Like Mr. Pickwick, Alice in Wonderland, or the Albert Memorial, he is a legend, which means that he shares the fate of all legendary figures and is identified with a whole series of ideas he does not mean and means a whole series of ideas with which he is not identified. It seems that the great public will go on enjoying him as the arch-type of clever young manhood just as long as it gets a kick out of the experienced star actress as the perennial Peter Pan.

It is bad for all of us, for Mr. Coward's generation and for its successors, because it leads to slop and confusion. For he symbolizes hardly anything at all with which we war babies care to be identified, certainly not our disillusionment. 'Twentieth-Century Blues' is just what most of us do not feel about our syncopated and mechanical pleasures, and I don't believe Mr. Coward feels it deep down or he could not have written such a haunting slow rhythm for the words. But the public does not read behind the librettos and lyrics.

His Variations upon a Theme in adultery no more

reflects our general sexual taste than does the new Puritanism. 'Doing a filthy pleasure is and short.' We partly admit this so we take our precautions; beyond that our subtlety and our so-called technique tend to stop short. No, in a variety of ways Mr. Coward answers for very few but his extremely sensitive self. His laughter is not our laughter, and his tears not our tears.

With one huge exception, however—Patriotism. Here we must admit at once that he has become the spokesman of the whole Empire. Politically, *Cavalcade* was worth to the National Government months of intensive propaganda. It put before us the whole machinery of sentiment, and inhibition, frauds, pious and otherwise, lies, love and honour, the lust for glory and the burden of fear—out of which war is made. It did more than that; it showed us how our fathers and mothers made war. Because what is essential about war is the peculiar clap-trap and idiom each generation gives to it. He emphasizes beyond all mistake just how sense is battered down by rhythm . . . 'We-don't-want-to-lose-you-but-we-think-you-ought-to-go'. . . . 'On-Saturday-I'm-willing-if-you'll-only-take-the-shilling-to-make-a-man-of-anyone-of-you.' Perhaps Mr. Coward's greatest lesson for us is the latent strength he finds in this music in men's lives. Anyway, his success has helped to give a certain sanctity to the old order and has credited him with the happy knack of being able to touch at will those parts of the national anatomy which automatically make national emotions well up to the surface.

Happy knack is half truth: technique it is, combined with moments of deep insight. Nevertheless, for our purpose the significance of his work seems to rest not in a search for social purposes but in the studied avoidance of them. His influence on Peace and War—and it

has penetrated the entire English-speaking world—seems to be derived not so much from any intellectual interpretation of his own but from the emotional witness he bears. For *Cavalcade* apparently justifies ideals vague, inarticulate, and even contradictory, but at the same time persistent and authentic.

There is no apology quite like a Diary of Events. Everyman can see *Cavalcade* as his own diary and can comfort himself: 'Here by the grace of Mr. Coward is what I feel about Peace and War. Comradeship making heavens out of unbelievable hells; let the toast be England. Yes, indeed, he holds the mirror up to the nature I saw and did my bit to improve. There is no need to go to the roots of ethic. My own little light of idealism cannot take away the world's darkness. My mission is small and confined. I would not go so far as to say "Our's but to do and die"—for that is to overdo it. Nor am I when it comes to war a death-or-glory boy. If you have ever seen intestines on barbed wire or a brain hanging out of a head, glory, somehow, is not death's alternative. *Cavalcade* then is the saga of our own understatement. "Mum, she must have been a very little lady." What a thrust! Just how I remember that reign. I can argue within the framework of that language. I am not prepared to take on the Esperanto of pacifism.'

Here is a foundation of part of Mr. Coward's power. For us who have to get it second-hand and can only marvel at the theatre-sense, the thrills are somewhat more vicarious, but occasionally it strikes up some memory charged with all the terrible intensity of early childhood. For those who did go through it, but the secret of whose stability has always been that they have never analysed their experiences either to themselves or to any one else, *Cavalcade* seems to have the same pungent effect as

good cheese. It digests their dinner; in fact everything except itself.

However, Mr. Coward is not only a master in theatrical spell-binding and dietetics; he does not rely only on back numbers of *The Illustrated London News*. In *Post Mortem* he set aside some of the highly stylized brilliance of the Oscar Wilde tradition—a formal sequence of necking and horse-play—and was no longer concerned with ‘raising flippancy to the point of genius’. The blurb tells us that in *Post Mortem* he is in earnest. ‘Its scope is without limits . . . he has asked himself whether our Western civilization has learnt anything from the war.’

The theme is of a soldier who just before he gets killed has ‘a feeling that one might see the whole business just for a second time before one dies’. He does, and there is conjured up before him a pretty potent hell-brew of mistresses, neurotics, spiritual inertia in the Church, lascivious corruption in business, cant and ramp poisoning everything they touch and touching everything—in fact, only Mother Love seems to stand the test. Just before John returns to ‘the great void’ he ought never to have left, he puts forth the cautious verdict of one who feels safer talking about heaven than going to it. ‘Perhaps in Eternity the mists will clear, but I doubt it.’ Lady Cavan, the mother, with few more years left to trail London’s social round, is more definite. ‘It doesn’t matter about Eternity. Wherever you are, in however deep oblivion your spirits rests, this love will be with you; I know it so very strongly; far beyond the limits of my understanding.’

This kind of puff-ball answer to the great problems of political, moral, and social *malaise*, and their interaction is nearly always a mistake. Metaphysics and the bitter-sweet is not a natural alliance; but apart from that the play is a powerful dramatic cartoon. There are moments

of the real, *saeva indignatio*. There are things in it which Swift would have admitted and Hogarth visualized. It represents a position which, with Mr. Coward's help, no doubt, many people have reached, that of the brilliant articulate unbeliever whose unbelief never quite inspires Big Personal Decisions. *Post Mortem* is the work of a man who is far too ironic to be indifferent, but who when a line has to be taken will tend to fall in with that of least resistance.

## II

I was anxious to meet Mr. Coward if only to talk to him as one ratepaying citizen to another and find out for myself whether he has a personal as against a stage attitude to the Peace and War problem. It was not easy to do. He is far too busy to answer long letters and I was foolish enough to send him a really elaborate questionnaire. However, I was saved by influence. Mr. Coward suggested I should go along to his dressing-room for a few minutes, before *To-night at 8.30*. I made the date at once. The whole thing was a rush; I was a bit late, so was he. I like marching past a stage-door for an appointment already made; it is one of the most satisfying of the surreptitious privileges.

Mr. Coward arrived, was expecting me, apologized for being late. Excellent beginning. We went up some stone steps. His feet made so little sound and there was such general agility in getting to his room that I doubt whether Nijinsky could have done it better. He said he hardly had a minute he could call his own; but though he looks rather ill he obviously thrives on hard labour. His dressing-room was over-heated and too full of flowers. The second problem he asked his servant to deal with.

During our talk this man went to and fro with incredible silence and discretion, never disregarding our talk blatantly but carrying on with the mysteries of make-up as if he were deaf at will.

'What do you want me to do?' Mr. Coward asked. I had some questions in a note-book. 'Perhaps I had better fire one or two at you. For instance, do you feel the theatre is a suitable medium for putting across peace propaganda in the way that Galsworthy put across social problems, or do you feel you must be national if the temper of your audience is national?'

*Mr. Coward:* 'I don't approve of propaganda at all.'

*A. C. J.:* 'Were you trying to draw any particular moral from *Cavalcade*?'

*Mr. Coward:* 'None whatever. It was just this: A Big Production for a Big Theatre. It was a simple story of an ordinary family. It came at the right time. I was so busy at work on it that I knew nothing about the General Election. I can't really be of much use to you, you know, for a peace book. Of course anybody the slightest bit intelligent doesn't approve of war again; but the ramifications are so many. It is impossible for one person to see the whole thing clearly. For my part I object frightfully to ardent pacifism. You see I have no Cause of any sort. I don't believe in Causes.'

*A. C. J.:* 'You think to take up a Cause would weaken your work?'

*Mr. Coward:* 'Not if the Cause had dramatic content. But as far as war is concerned masculine human nature is fundamentally warlike; it always has been and it always will be. All you need to start your war off is, as in tonight's papers, for some major to be bombed, some English governess at Lake Geneva has only got to be

imped. It's all terribly depressing, but there it is. You are up against another embarrassing fact. You will always find that men who are connected with the Services and who have been trained and disciplined are much nicer than ordinary civilians.'

Mr. Coward was sitting at his dressing-table and putting a comb through his hair. He switched round and made a gesture something like surrender and looked infinitely sad. Then there was a telephone call, after which he soliloquized to himself in the glass. 'The prospects of war, you know, to the ordinary normal man will not stop him fighting. The boys will all join up again. They don't know anything about war and they will think it all too marvellous until they are in it. I agree it was entirely false the whole time but you can never explain it that way. Some awful little megalomaniac sets himself up, makes his few pathetic excursions, and your war is ready.'

*A. C. F.*: 'Nothing overrides the appeal of war, then?'

*Mr. Coward*: 'No. Certain men will always want certain excitement and will always expect that war will give it them.'

I recalled Duhamel's plea; 'I suppose the origin lies in suffering being an incommunicable experience?' 'Exactly. You can't get round this personal factor. War is bound up in each individual man's life.'

*A. C. F.*: 'It is not only men, I suppose. Don't you think that women are more responsible for wars?'

*Mr. Coward*: 'The women are the audience.' If a catastrophic war were to break out in the next few years, he said he would do all he could to remain personally detached from all the insane passions it aroused. He would try his best to avoid provoking them. He would to that extent be independent of them. 'But I would no doubt feel it was necessary to do the best I could to stand



by the country. The country is in a state of peril. That is the thing that would override all other considerations at the time. Further, though it would mean the end of my work and ambitions I would want to share the dangers my friends were going through.'

A. C. J.: 'Is there no means of getting people to alter their attitude to war?'

Mr. Coward: 'You might as well go up to a Roman Catholic and set about making him into a Christian Scientist. No, whatever use I may make of my mental capacities there is no use in trying to influence the masses by persuasion.'

I mentioned *Cavalcade* again, and said I thought he probably had a far greater influence than he realized: I had seen more emotional upheaval among an audience during and after *Cavalcade* than at any other play or film.

Mr. Coward: 'Most audiences misunderstood it. The war scenes in *Cavalcade* are intended to be extremely ironic, but both the irony and the pathos are real. I accept war as an inevitable part of human nature, as I accept dark hair or light hair. If you have a group of a dozen people you have a situation that will very soon lead to war. They start level, one is more ambitious or able, seizes power, and there are immediately plots to overthrow him. This is all profoundly depressing; I admit it. I am sorry I have no noble ideas to offer.'

'Don't you feel that most of us are actuated by fear of something unknown and that the fear depends on the mystery being kept up?'—'No, not really. A lot of people are amused, and there are tremendous thrills, and it is all based on illusion. Obviously if some great man were to approach me and suggest, "If you do this certain thing you can take a decisive part in preventing the outbreak of war," I'd do as I was told, but there is

nobody in the world capable of making such an incredible suggestion.'

'A clarion voice cried 'Twenty minutes'. 'That means you have to go. Take it from me, there is no hope for the people. They always make bloody fools of themselves, and they always will do.'

Mr. Coward had by now completed his customary transfiguration and was almost ready to act once more his own plays and sing his own songs. Replying we speak as one individual. . . .

I walked through theatre-land and the tyranny of London's pleasures, along the Mall by St. James's Park among the shades of Wycherley; then home where the wireless gave me my epilogue. 'And here is the inimitable Noel Coward himself,' sighed an ecstatic *compère*. 'Listen to him singing his "Mad Dogs and Englishmen go out in the midday sun"', and sure enough there was the same clipped, dry, back-of-the-throaty voice dismissing Breed as he had dismissed War, at about 150 to the minute. Too good to be true or believed. It reminded me of a far-off day at Broadstairs when told to go and hunt for Treasure, I casually spooned a hole in the sand and pulled out a shilling.

FOR as the nature of Foul Weather lieth not in a shower or two of rain but in an inclination thereto of many days together so the nature of war consisteth not in the actual fighting but in the known disposition thereto during all the time there is no assurance to the contrary.

THOMAS HOBBS: *Leviathan*

## CHAPTER XIV

### THE MYTH OF PUBLIC OPINION

I. *General Will—Peace Ballot—Peace and popular interest—Sanctions.*

II. *Conclusions from Beales—Trusteeship and Duty—The value of individual lives—Sentiment and Moral Philosophy—Road Deaths—Social Hygiene—National Defence.*

III. *Cant—Swift's diagnosis—The travelled Fool—Educational advance—Government Propaganda—Brand New Rattle—Sydney Smith—Arnold and Sanderson—Bury.*

IV. *Dull work—English—Sweets at Stratford—Shakespeare's Patriotism—Drum and Trumpet History—Dark Ages—Beaujé.*

V. *Materialism—Short memories—Opinion and Grace—Facts in the making.*

#### I

THE greatest crimes are committed in the name of public opinion. If our Government declares war again it will be because public opinion once more looked on it as the only way. If our Government talks about 'steady and collective resistance against acts of aggression' it is because such talk is calculated to be a correct interpretation of public opinion. There is the constant assumption that some General Will exists too close to us to be distinguished clearly, but rational, passing judgments, ready to fight, salute the colours, pay the bill, and at the same time take an active and even embarrassing interest in the preservation of Peace. A General Will liable to make mistakes and act inconsistently, to hold for our purpose most persistently to the tag *si vis pacem para bellum*, but susceptible to influence.

It is from this assumption, consciously or unconsciously, that so many pacifists derive their strength and weaken their cause. If we assume that public opinion is interested in the preservation of peace we imply that there

is a compelling mass continuity of aim and steadiness of purpose. Less than this, and we simply saddle it with the attributes of idle curiosity.

We may perhaps be building our faith on recent evidence of a Peace Ballot when about twelve million adults, with a 90 per cent majority, gave written support for a League system and its attendant responsibilities. We should be grateful for blessings received, but it is rashness to hope that a vote once recorded the Public has unburdened its secret heart and registered a mighty or enduring decision. As Mr. Wingfield Stratford cynically pointed out those who cried 'Nothing but the Reform Bill' were to discover afterwards that it was indeed Nothing but the Reform Bill. On the other hand, it is an achievement to have got public opinion beyond the X symbol and confronted it with the alternative of two- or three-letter words; but those hordes of replies—quite apart from whether it was possible to give one-word answers to the questions and at the same time convey sense—do not stand necessarily for any quality of mass understanding or sympathy that we may hopefully associate with sustained interest.

Resolve the mass into its individual constituents; there is in this particular no reason to think that the whole will be greater than the sum of its parts; it is a select band of individuals who can honestly claim to have given five consecutive and solitary minutes of thought to any problem not immediately the trivial round or petty desire. Most of our electors perhaps extend themselves in argument on Peace and War over the full hour about once in six months, but only very rarely allow themselves to be restrained on those occasions by the demands of relevance or impartiality.

The late Charles Masterman, one of the greatest talkers

Of our time, thought the basis of good talk was recklessness, but it does not follow that reckless commonplace on Peace and War is to be encouraged as good talk. A modest number of the electorate has developed a certain interest, has gone as far as challenging a comparison or two on the subject, and has become sufficiently self-conscious to deplore Beaverbrook and Rothermere propaganda out of a principle which if not fully coherent is at least articulate.

The minority are those who have become sufficiently engrossed to submit their impressions to reason and to laborious inquiry, and who have reached the decisive stage of regarding criticism as a means to enlightenment; but in spite of this our minority does not really give substance to a public opinion, not merely because it is scarce but rather because it is too divided among itself to produce either leadership or a programme.

The Sanctions question, for instance, first raised as a problem of policy in 1932 but conveniently shelved, has now succeeded in separating those who believe that Peace is possible only if Force is controlled from those who claim that Force as we know it, and Peace as we desire it, are incompatibles. It has divided those younger Conservatives who speak for their Party in Parliament and believe in the League, from those who finance it outside and do not. Disarmament has not provided a cause urgently clear and inspiring to swamp the interests opposed to it. The advocates of the Regional League system, of non-aggression Pacts, of British Imperialism first and all else after, of Marxian economics and Socialist stability, of fool-proof neutrality laws, all officially love peace, in varying degrees dislike each other, and help to prevent the emergence of a democratic determination to control the various factions that control our executive.

## II

Beales' fascinating *History of Peace* (significantly enough on the 'Remainders' List) provokes two broad conclusions. First, as far as peace policy is concerned that definitions of the Faith have tended to ignore the limitations of the Faithful. In pointing to 'a fundamental weakness' of the Peace Societies in the middle of the nineteenth century he quotes J. T. Shotwell as saying: 'There is no more persistent error in the calculations of reformers than the attempt to reduce a complex situation to a single formula and then apply that formula in its absolute fullness to varying conditions and stages of culture.'<sup>1</sup> Second, that although the search for an absolute and even a temporary formula has been of no avail, it would be unwise to assert that this failure was inevitable from the start and safer to stress that there has been a lack of co-ordination between peoples and governments.

Without some higher conception of political trusteeship on the part of the rulers and of moral duty on the part of the ruled, public opinion remains like homunculus, an experiment gone wrong, a manufactured abortion. The people is still a government's greatest enemy and homunculus must never become a body that can resist as well as a voice that can complain. It is still the operative idea that governments prone to acts of gratuitous generosity are asking for a fall, and the philosophy of those in power is nearly always a return with exorbitant interest for the blessings derived from their mere existence.

If a man is to be called with accuracy a political animal the emphasis should be on the origin of our species rather than on the growth of our governments. It appals

<sup>1</sup> See *History of Peace*, p. 95.

the senses and undermines all faith to consider the myriads of citizens who have butchered each other with sanctified savagery for laws or ideals that died with them. The causes are forgotten, but time cannot wash away the blood of so many murdered men; thus each generation has crucified public opinion with its own peculiar cruelty and self-deception.

Only the pale cast of thought can maintain that the value of life has been enhanced by the values our ancestors put on theirs; the slogan that the worth of an ideal can be tested by whether a man is prepared ultimately to die for it, is, so far as it overthrows the humble day-to-day aspirations of the community, a perverted sentiment, the language of suicides throughout the ages. Most of the military holocausts proclaimed by men, with the pompous assistance of their respective religious cults, as divine in origin—had not the proclamations and their witness been lies in the soul—would have transformed the Deity into a kind of omnipotent confidence-trickster.

If civilization is to be measured by the store set on individual human lives, then we are fighting to-day, not so much to save it as to bring it into existence. My citizenship is a privilege worth flaunting and developing only if it enables me to live. The other civic struggles against poverty, corruption, between rival social systems, cannot be faced effectively until this primary stability has been assured. At the moment vindicated by all the examples of history the only code readily obeyed is that of organized national service involving as its ultimate a supreme sacrifice.

Experience shows that the individual gets in certain circumstances a moral kick out of the idealism of self-destruction, and is as a corollary somewhat ashamed of his daily, persistent and instinctive efforts to keep himself alive.



There is, too, the joy in surrender to be found in Hor-  
neger's *Cris du Monde*—the death-like despair of modern  
inhabitants for their civilization, of cheap metals, their  
higher purchase culture, their easy ways; recall in that  
mad jangle the hollow rhythm of Brave New World, the  
underground trains that carry millions from bondage to  
bondage twice a day, perhaps war alone will remove this  
monotonous horror, perhaps Armageddon itself is the  
perfect freedom we aspire to:

There's none of these so lonely and poor of old  
But dying has made us rarer gifts than gold.

Dr. Flügel asserts that Man 'grows uneasy whenever he is threatened with the removal of some cherished source of suffering'. We must be resolute, and whatever the temptations of misery, substitute the worship of life for morbid adolescence buried in foreign fields that are for ever England.

The new material advantages of modern life can supplement civilization only when we are proud of living as long as possible and ashamed of dying before our time. We are bound by the *mort main* of moral philosophy. The sententious and even the academic ask: 'Are there not ideals and values of which man is aware as being higher than his own life and after which he strives in defiance of mere personal well-being, and is not all this awareness and striving his unique faculty and his claim to be the image of the divine?' Rotund bishops ask, 'What of Christ's example?' These questions have lost much of their sting. They have been exploited too often to suit too many contexts. The element of half-truth is in them and has helped to stultify the originals of Public Opinion. For the purpose of a peace offering, in as far as all this God-like capacity expresses itself, and is fulfilled in

national warfare we well ask in return whether a demonstrably evil means is compatible with an ideal end. When much pious ingenuity was wasted in an attempt to find a moral sanction for the Boer War a letter by T. A. Greer was published in *The Pilot* in 1901 which gave the decisive answer. 'If nothing is to be counted wrong-doing through which final good is wrought, we must give up either the idea of there being such a thing as wrong-doing or the idea of there being such a thing as final good.'

It is very often argued that the alternative to Nietzsche's imperative of 'Live Dangerously' is what Mr. Wells has called the Potato Peace. Public opinion at ease in luxury cinemas and wallowing in the two-dimensional heroics of Hollywood and Elstree is undoubtedly imbued with a strong sense of the necessity for Stern Endeavour. But if we were honest with ourselves we must realize that stagnation is not necessarily synonymous with peace, whereas desolation is with war. The dangers confronting a society in which peace is assured have only a theoretic interest and provide no excuse whatever for supporting a system which is founded upon the relative capacities of national groups to kill, maim, or torture. It is this kind of casuistry that defends armament manufacture because it creates employment. It is edifying to know that road deaths must have meant a boom for undertakers. More bodies—more coffins—good for trade.

Admittedly we do not burn men for the heresy of transubstantiation, or hang fourteen-year old urchins for pilfering. We do not pay to see a juicy drawing and quartering. Our ancestors of the eighteenth and seventeenth centuries, we agree, had only a surface culture—beneath the brocade, definitely savages. Pepys' bland account of the Regicide Executions is a jolt to sensibilities in us of which he must—alarming thought—have been

unaware. Public opinion has thus grown out of its recent sadistic practices and now allows judicial murder by hanging only as a means to social advance. We satisfy ourselves through our public conscience that it is not retribution but a form of hygiene. In affairs of State, treasons, *praemunires*, the whole orgy of penalties by which a government struggled to grasp an elusive authority from an obstinate people—these are memories. The blood bath is retained now merely for purposes of national defence. This sounds modest and sensible enough if we are accurate in claiming that public opinion will obey the call of arms only in defence of home and family; there is the appearance of a great lesson learnt and of a welcome and unexpected sobriety—a deceptive appearance.

The idea that territories can be defended solely from within is a picturesque fancy peculiarly modern. It was a fiction in the days of fyrd levies, a laughable legend when cavaliers could lift down their swords from the fire-place. To-day it is unwarranted optimism to expect that the necessary measures of our national defences can be limited to one continent. Effective national defence is universal retaliation and automatic aggression. We are not at this point concerned whether armaments are now more or less necessary to preserve our national existence or even whether the price of preserving national existence can be too high, but are merely claiming that armies, navies, and air forces are not in the strict sense of the words defence forces at all. Yet from day to day, this silly confusion is perpetuated in newspaper leaders, in political speeches, and there is no semblance of outcry against it; but if a public opinion means anything it must involve a general capacity to see through the more blatantly false or misleading catchwords.

## III

Cant in terms of national behaviour is usually a peculiar form of mass prurience involving policy at once absurd and despicable; in terms of emotion it is the epitome of all false standards. A free and responsible opinion must mean a steady and collective resistance to every form of cant. The essential deception of cant rests in its glamorous and dogmatic language and it is popular in as far as it is a substitute for thought. Peace and War opinion is particularly infected with the cant germ. As it is a desperate disease perhaps there is no diagnosis more satisfactory than Swift's:

'It is observable, that altho' the *Bodies* of human Creatures be affected with an infinite variety of Disorders, which elude the Power of Medicine, yet their *Minds* are also overrun with an equal Variety. And I think, that out of regard to the Publick Peace and Emolument, as well as the Repose of many pious and valuable Families, this latter species of *Incurables* ought principally to engage our Attention and Beneficence. I believe, an *Hospital* for such *Incurables*, will be universally allowed necessary, if we only consider, what numbers of absolute Incurables every *Profession*, *Rank*, and *Degree* would perpetually produce, which, at present, are only national grievances, and of which we can have no other effectual Method to purge the Kingdom.'<sup>1</sup>

Cant is nearly always hard to detect. Its disguises legion. In addition to the Defence fallacy it hides behind the conception of National Honour. Only cant makes it possible for public opinion to cling to the obstinate belief

<sup>1</sup> A Serious and Useful Scheme to make an Hospital for Incurables of Universal Benefit to all His Majesty's Subjects. See the None-such Edition—*Gullivers Travels and Selected Writings in Prose and Verse*. Ed. by John Hayward.

that every nation has not by now trampled upon every principle and act compatible with the semblance of honour. Cant helps to differentiate those who die in war from those who live through it. Cant has no room on its cenotaphs for the millions who have survived to taste disillusion. It lurks behind symbols, behind the attractions of military ranks, medals, and uniforms. It confuses France, Germany, Japan with French, German and Japanese Governments. It is responsible for such benighted statements as 'I hate Americans', 'I loathe the French', 'I am all for Germany'.

I met a distinguished musician who expressed a hatred of France chiefly because of his unfortunate experience in certain restaurants in Paris, where he had been somewhat insolently overcharged for bad meals. It is to be hoped that foreign visitors to England do not condemn the British race because our railway sandwich tends to be stale and expensive and our coffee diluted. Englishmen who know England fairly well, and would agree that it is just because of this knowledge that they are not prepared to generalize about Englishmen, will go to some European state and after a holiday of about ten days will return to disseminate the most arrogant nonsense on national characteristics. As Dr. Hunter of York, a shrewd eighteenth-century apothecary and spare-time philosopher, observed: 'Of all fools a travelled fool is the most intolerable. He brings back the follies of other nations and adds them to his own.'<sup>1</sup>

Cant's latest loveliness is a recruiting campaign. The doctor's latest mandate advertised everywhere from first division football matches to fifth-rate news films is that the Territorial Army means new life to all those suffering from day and night starvation.

The apparent failure of the campaign suggests that

<sup>1</sup> Alexander Hunter, *Receipts in Modern Cookery*.

there is a limit, beyond which a long-suffering patriotism cannot be exploited by our Government. We are not told here and now precisely, against what or whom we are required to defend the country. We are not even told whether territorial service is to be limited to our own coasts.

The news film is perhaps the most dangerous drug of all, and a public inquiry is urgently required on the subject of its propaganda. It would encourage a sense of values to know whether the War Office is in any way connected with it. Mr. R. C. Sherriff assures me that there are signs of improvement among the Hollywood executives. We seem still to be in the experimental stage when the opportunities of expensive special pleading are too tempting to be missed and when the quality of the entertainment suggests that they have been duly taken.

For patriotism comes ill from an industry boasting so few at its head who can claim British nationality. If the emotions our patriotic films are intended to arouse inspire a sustained public opinion, no doubt the incomes and positions of our more cosmopolitan Directors will be a matter of more widespread popular concern.

Educational advance is the most potent and enduring cure for cant, but the nature of our malady seems to demand that the cure will be applied half-heartedly and with reservations.

Teachers significantly enough are demanding that more time and attention should be given to the study of International Relations, and to the implications of a League system. The fundamental meaning of this demand is that the Government should be asked to pay for the teaching of ideas in Government schools which if honestly taught will tend to challenge and circumscribe a national sovereignty of which the Government

is the outward and visible sign. It is one propaganda against another, and there is no reason to expect that the Government will see fit to separate education from its own. The wisest comment I heard when the Hoare-Laval plan was repudiated was simply: 'There is no *prima facie* case for a government to commit suicide.' There is, of course, in terms of education all the difference in the world between an unconscious striving after conformity and the deliberate breeding of slave minds. Indeed, the more haphazard technique is likely to be the more insidiously effective, but we may never assume that our Government will encourage a line of educational inquiry which might some day discredit those elements of cant on which its power is based. Education for the mass of the people is therefore an integral part of the code which is the Government's *raison d'être*. It is not primarily identified with the training of a critical faculty or giving the pupil a chance to judge with detachment the relative merits of political institutions.

There was the trivial case of the little girl who wrote in her essay that 'England is only a small country but it is better than any other country'. That she became a national heroine did not merely lay bare the depravity of our Press-gang Patriotism, it raised the whole question of the sensibility of the Commons on points of honour.

Those interested in elementary pathology should read the account of the debate in Hansard. There was Sir George Hurst's minute statement of fact on the motion for adjournment. An epic which implied that it was not in the national interest for school inspectors to whisper political asides to lady school teachers. The Minister of Education put up a magnificent defence. The little girl herself did not hear the aside, she only got five out of ten for the essay in the first place, and the inspector was

in his opinion an experienced man and a patriot of integrity. The greatest moment of all came, however, when a member asked inadvertently whether so much publicity was right, and whether it was really wise for the little girl to be brought along to the debate, and was gallantly interrupted by Sir George Astbury. 'It will do her good to hear for herself that this House holds with some one who says that this country is the best in the world.' It was, in fact, the kind of procedure that might be satisfactory in a land of Brand New Rattles; but in England 1936, it can only help to confirm the impression that if Democracy is still on Trial the verdict will have to be brought in very shortly of 'Guilty but Insane'.

'The future is in your hands,' murmur distinguished visitors who have a pretty good strangle-grip on the present to countless children on countless Speech Days. Do not accuse distinguished visitors of holding too many platitudinous aces up their sleeves with Ah Sing's 'intent to deceive'. Most of their speeches are habits fostered by the public's taste for formal clichés from famous men. But the deception is none the less shocking. There is no political future for an electorate that has not been openly taught to distinguish the general benefits of the régime from its degenerate and corrupting interests, and to act on that distinction. No future for the pupils of an educational system which is not deliberately set up to combat lethargy. Politically we are not inoculated until it has been made quite clear to teachers as well as pupils that although one of the obligations of democracy may mean more widespread military responsibilities yet one of its privileges is an effective share in the decision whether that obligation or that responsibility exists.

Sydney Smith's criticism of conditions one hundred years ago has its relevance to-day. 'If men had made no



more progress in the common arts of life than they have in education we should at this moment be dividing our food with our fingers and drinking out of the palms of our hands.' In the interim the great reformers like Arnold and Sanderson, in spite of their other achievements have done but little to free us from the ideology of war. Arnold, as Mr. St. John Ervine has pointed out, turned tears or similar adolescent *cris du cœur* into moral offences and substituted the cult of the stiff upper lip. Sanderson was responsible for such neurotic bombast as: 'There is the peace which follows on contentment with things as they are. The peace of death. The land of peace and of convention, and of cruel contentment. The land of the dark Satanic mills—as in Blake's *Imagery*. War may come to break up this deathful peace.'

Bury, in his masterpiece, warns us that the struggle for Freedom of Thought must be vigilantly carried on from generation to generation as long as there are human communities with interest to dispute it. He ends on a note of challenge: 'Meanwhile, nothing should be left undone to impress upon the young that freedom of thought is an axiom of human progress. It may be feared, however, that this is not likely to be done for a long time to come. For our methods of early education are founded on authority. It is true that children are sometimes exhorted to think for themselves. But the parent or instructor who gives this excellent advice is confident that the results of the child's thinking for himself will agree with the opinions which his elders consider desirable. It is assumed that he will reason from principles which have already been instilled into him by authority. But if his thinking for himself takes the form of questioning these principles, whether moral or religious, his parents and teachers, unless they are very exceptional persons,

will be extremely displeased, and will certainly discourage him. It is, of course, only singularly promising children whose freedom of thought will go so far. In this sense it might be said that "distrust thy father and mother" is the first commandment with promise. It should be a part of education to explain to children, as soon as they are old enough to understand, when it is reasonable, and when it is not, to accept what they are told, on authority.<sup>1</sup>

## IV

If during the next few years yet another generation helps to endow the primeval cause of human destruction posterity will do well to recall that we also were conformed and conditioned, that our teachers were themselves ill-educated and certainly underpaid, often embittered and with no particular qualifications to train minds, that uncouth formalized examinations dulled our imaginative impulses and demanded of us knowledge that entailed a wholly spurious conception of our national greatness. It was a tyranny we could not overturn. It took away inspiration from literature and life from history.

We have inherited English literature in an abbreviated form. We know of one or two names—most poets seem to have fairly rare names—which are easy to remember; their dates are difficult, sometimes we can make up a little equation: Spenser equals Faery Queen, Keats equals Nightingale, Tennyson equals Maud, Shakespeare equals the Bard and a lot more as well. For he above all has been made suitable for the kiddies. I once attended a matinée performance of *The Merchant of Venice* at Stratford. The theatre was crammed with whole regiments of children. Their enthusiasm was not sustained, but the

<sup>1</sup> *History of Freedom of Thought*, pp. 250-1.

great moments were whenever the curtains went up, and during the trial scene when Antonio was duly applauded and Shylock hissed. Jessica's love scene was made inordinately luscious by the steady sucking of innumerable sweets. A good time was had by all, but undoubtedly to-morrow's essay undermined our joy and it is the memory of the essay that persists.

Visits to the Natural History Museum were spoilt for me in that way. Somehow as children we are not to be trusted. Our attention will wander unless we are given a task that will make us attend. We must be caned, we must be rewarded. It is all wrong: children have a far more spontaneous interest in attaining knowledge than is commonly realized, and it is very often only this distrust of them that kills the desire to learn. However, what is it about Shakespeare that makes him the greatest of all school treats? It is not merely this negative association of Shakespeare in our childhood with crocodile walks and even crocodile tears which is counterfeit: it is the retention of certain patriotic images conceived by Shakespeare in Renaissance grandeur, distorted by us from our hazy impression of his context and environment. For Shakespeare's patriotism become a relic when they discovered mud at Passchendaele, scandal in munitions and potency in poison gases.

Now all the youth of England are on fire,  
And silken dalliance in the wardrobe lies;  
Now thrive the armourers, and honour's thought  
Reigns solely in the breast of every man:  
They sell the pasture now to buy the horse,  
Following the mirror of all Christian Kings  
With winged heels, as English Mercuries.

This language sanctifying chivalry cannot live on, save

as a lie, with our monstrous paraphernalia of twentieth-century war. William's casual expression to-day is our overwhelming necessity: 'I am affeared there are few die well that die in battle. For how can they charitably dispose of anything when blood is their argument.'

The absence of any popular sense of values derived from English literature is in no small measure due to the monotonous suffering we are made to undergo in the name of English History.

As long ago as 1874 John Richard Green wrote his *Short History of the English People*. In the preface he defined its purpose: 'I have devoted more space to Chaucer than to Crecy, to Caxton than to the petty strife of Yorkists and Lancastrian, to the Poor Law of Elizabeth than to her Victory at Cadiz, to the Methodist Revival than to the escape of the Young Pretender. Whatever the worth of the present work may be, I have striven throughout that it should never sink into a drum and trumpet history.' Now, in spite of all the research and experiment, the advance in University facilities, Green's conception of history has not become an integral factor in the formation of a public opinion. The degraded Drum and Trumpet tradition still dominates our national faith and moulds our national conduct.

The huge majority of British citizens ends its routine education wholly unaware of the true correctives of English Social History while Europe comes out as nothing more than a very tricky jig-saw puzzle. The epic is England's development from hairy barbarians into an Empire on which the Sun Never Sets, or for that matter, Never Rises. The silly bits are skipped. That the period from the departure of the Romans to the Norman Conquest covers about the same amount of time as that from the Accession of Edward II in 1327 to Edward VIII in

1936 is not a matter of grave cultural concern. Those ages were dark, and as Dean Inge has pointed out with unintentional irony: 'The dark Ages might never have existed.' The attraction of *1066 and All That* is that it gives us all the opportunity of hiding our ignorance behind our laughter.

As for 'the armed savages of Europe' (to borrow a term of a distinguished Highland Chieftain), they have provided us with enemies we have always beaten and with allies who never prove really worthy of our trust. Though we have always won through there has hardly ever been a time when we were not hopelessly outnumbered. There have been one or two episodes which might appear to be blemishes and do not quite fit in with the slow-moving honesty of our character, the prestige of our Services, and pre-eminence of our breed. But it will be found that these are mostly morals to adorn the tale.

There has been an occasional Bad King. There was John, but as we all know Magna Charta brought about the People's Liberties in spite, indeed almost because, of him; every now and then there was a military or naval reverse. Fontenoy—but we were let down by the Dutch; Byng withdrew from Minorca—but was immediately court-martialled and shot. In nearly every crisis from William at Hastings to the Angels at Mons everything was for the best. In nearly every case the implications of nationalist histories 'suitable for junior forms' are as crude as this. Factual knowledge begins and ends with dynastic bias—a lengthy list of place-names and appropriate dates, which mean Victories.

Our children have no knowledge of another long list which were neither won nor even drawn. These are omitted and are superfluous to any story of National Advance. The memory of Agincourt is not troubled with

that of Bêaujê. Fortunately our grounding in French makes it not so much a language as a Grammarian's Funeral, for if we could read and obtain history textbooks suitable for French junior forms we would have first-hand evidence of the scant attention foreigners pay to truth, and of the morbid lengths to which they will carry national prejudice.

## v

The Writing is on the Wall and translated into terms of nationalism it still means death to Babylon.

Part of our glorious heritage is a mass materialism without sufficient material to make it bearable for the masses. Materialism offers nothing by itself, hence the frenzied attempts of huge incorporated Pleasure Industries to compensate in illusion for the shortcomings of mere facts, doing in a new way what religions have always set out to do—to provide consolation when worldly goods fail. To-day it is consolation in the absorption of all disturbing thoughts, solace by hiding the ugliness and evil with the camouflage of glory.

The War God is a prominent deity in our pantheon of pleasures, because his cult above all thrives on short memories and the inability to combine protracted idealism with the overwhelming demands of the moment.

For our lives and conditions seem to have colour only for about six months on each side of the present, farther back or ahead the canvas either fades or has not been filled in. It is difficult to think, imagine, believe, or fear steadily and for long. Fervour was added to the Apostles' belief in Christ because a second coming was regarded as imminent. War is not considered but in spasms and with hysteria.

Patriotism has been merged in pornography. National fear and the clamour of self-defence has about it neither the hall-mark of authentic horror nor the beauty of elemental innocence, it is sophisticated, manufactured, over-subscribed by the shareholders. A blatant, vulgar, bogus fear; fear sustaining ignorance, and ignorance fear. The symptoms suggest that to add to what is public is to subtract from what is opinion, that the increasing output of number means diminishing returns in value. It is once again the primeval problem of adaptation, glanced at by Sir Evelyn Wrench when he complained that we were running a twentieth-century world with eighteenth-century minds.

The struggle with the new environment is for the pioneers to undertake, public opinion tends to remain a myth until the formula has been found, till physical growth and control has its psychological equivalent.

For opinion to be public, for the machinery of life to be civilized we have to reflect the state of Grace: only when we have taken over to our own uses this medieval pattern shall we have become fully adapted to the world of our own making. In the past the search for Grace has actually been advanced by War and stultified by Peace, but it seems that we have now reached that moment of history when war not only challenges ideals but also the very breath of human life.

Opinion, Grace, and the panoply of culture are with us again only when War is seen in its own image, blood that does not purify, blood that is the stigma of suicide.

But in this flux of vast uncertainty the greatest assumption is that we must all perish of mere political and economic ineptitude.

During the summer of 1907 in the short-lived *Albany Magazine* Mr. Lowes Dickinson reviewed Morley's

'Machiavelli. 'The International Anarchy was working towards it ~~never~~ <sup>never</sup>, and at that moment he more than most men must have appreciated the way the world would end—destruction from frivolity—bang from whimper, but he struck out for optimism. Let us who have the great ordeal of War for a memory as well as a warning take strength from it. 'A consistent Machiavellian would be a monster, a consistent Tolstoy, as yet a chimera. We welter in the mid-space, floundering as we may, unable to deny facts but unwilling to deny ideals, and we are right, for ideals themselves are facts in the making with their roots in facts made.'